A FIGHTING PARSON

The Autobiography of

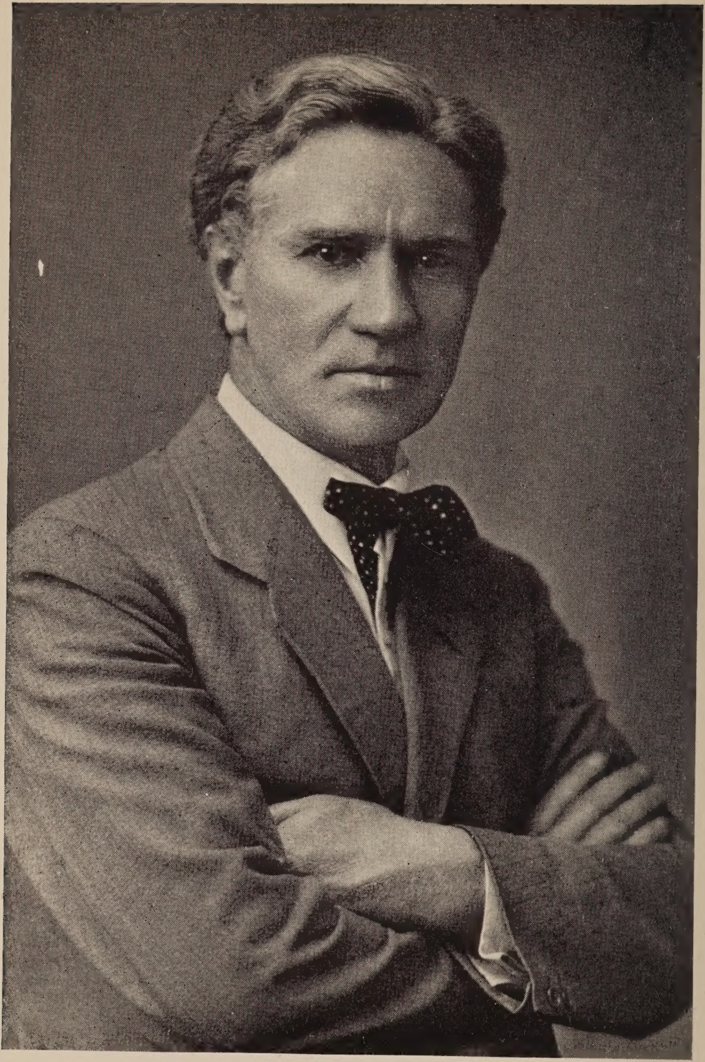
ALEXANDER IRVINE

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
OCT 12 1942
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BV 3785 .I7 A3 1930
Irvine, Alexander, 1863-
1941.
A fighting parson

A FIGHTING PARSON

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
ALEXANDER IRVINE



Alexander Irvine

A FIGHTING PARSON

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
ALEXANDER IRVINE

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
OCT 12 1942
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AN·ATLANTIC·MONTHLY·PRESS·BOOK

BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1930

Copyright, 1929, 1930,
By Little, Brown, and Company

All rights reserved

Published April, 1930

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS BOOKS
ARE PUBLISHED BY
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO THE MEMORY OF

PERCY STICKNEY GRANT

SCHOLAR, SAINT, FRIEND OF THE POOR
AND THE GREATEST CHURCHMAN OF HIS AGE

FOREWORD

I HAVE seen him in the flesh never, I think, but once, and that was half a lifetime ago. Many there are who will read this book knowing Alexander Irvine far better than the writer of this brief introduction; yet to no one, old or young, who reads it can Irvine remain a stranger. Here is the essence of him stamped on every page. His habits of mind and body, his hot likes and cordial detestations, his turbulent enthusiasms and blustery prejudices, his naked candor about himself and everybody else, his desperate loyalties to the unfortunate and the dispossessed — all are set down quite simply and naturally, but with immense gusto. Here is Faith without a suspicion of cant; here is Hope in spite of darkness; here is Charity that indeed suffereth long. At every turn of the story's road the reader pauses and says to himself, "A *man* has passed this way."

His enemies do not follow the Scriptural injunction and love him; he fights — like the traditional Irishman — not for himself, but for the Cause. Years ago Mr. J. I. C. Clarke wrote a ballad which, if it is not in the anthologies, has lost its place to worser verse.

It is about the Fighting Race, and chronicles the battles Irishmen have fought for causes they have made their own.

> " Oh, the fighting races don't die out,
> If they seldom die in bed,
> For love is first in their hearts, no doubt,"
> Said Burke. Then Kelly said:
> " When Michael, the Irish Archangel, stands,
> The Angel with the sword,
> And the battle-dead from a hundred lands
> Are ranged in one big horde,
> Our line, that for Gabriel's trumpet waits,
> Will stretch three deep that day,
> From Jehoshaphat to the Golden Gates —
> Kelly and Burke and Shea."
> " Well, here's Thank God for the race and the sod! "
> Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.

This for centuries has been the story of Irishmen, and Irvine slips into line with the Irish guards, Kelly and Burke and Shea. In alien countries they have nursed their honorable wounds, content with duty done and glory won, while others have gathered up more profitable rewards.

What a life! There 's matter here for half a dozen biographies. Born in a tiny stone cabin, spending his boyhood clambering through the bog without food enough to fill his stomach or clothes to cover his back, he found himself at eighteen intelligent and ignorant, unable to read or write. Then he first learned what soap and water is, and then and there his education began. Currying horses for the gentlemen in the big house, serving in the Marines, trying his damnedest to reach Khartoum before General Gordon died, sleeping four hours a night and studying in the interstices between drilling, fighting, and traveling, "making" Oxford University itself, and swapping it for a new round of thirst and hunger in New York. Religion, God had given him at his mother's breast, and in the New World about him Religion shaped his energies of heart and mind and spirit. He went through a theological school. Just what theology taught him I don't know, but oddly enough he learned from it the more to love his fellow men. His idea of a forum of religious experience bore fruit through his lifelong friendship with Dr. Percy Stickney Grant. Until the Great War split the world he fought in half a hundred fields for labor, for liberalism, for the rights of man and the glory of God, and just a little for the joy of fighting.

Dr. Irvine sees by flashes. In New York he saw the innermost meaning of destitution, and marshaled the forces of social sympathy to meet it. In the war he saw that the will meant the power to win, and he worked mightily to screw that will to the sticking point. After the war the world grew sicker still. He understood it and helped to cheer it back to health.

One word more. To know Irvine is to know his mother, and if you would see his heart as some day the Just Judge will see it, get from some old-fashioned bookstore the tribute he wrote many years ago to

" My Lady of the Chimney Corner." She sits there, his mother and yours and mine, and all of ours, the incarnation of all that loves tenderly and forever in this hard old world.

Ellery Sedgwick

Atlantic Office
February 1, 1930

CONTENTS

Foreword vii

I Antrim 3

II The Education of a Royal Marine 20

III New York and Worse 36

IV A Missionary at Large 52

V A Christian Socialist 70

VI The Church Forum 79

VII Books and Soap Boxes 94

VIII Acting and Teaching 111

IX The War: In England and in France 122

X Mind-Sweeping at the Front . . . 135

XI Talking to Keep Up Courage . . 161

XII Courage after Peace 180

XIII Ireland in Arms 197

XIV Home and to Bed 205

XV Crises Abroad: England and Germany 216

XVI Peregrinations 233

XVII The Life of Christ 243

XVIII The Passion for Truth 256

XIX Retrospect 272

A FIGHTING PARSON

I

ANTRIM

THERE were fourteen of us — father, mother, and twelve children. Our house was a little stone cabin in a back alley in the town of Antrim, in Ulster. Five passed away in infancy. The rest of us left one by one as we were able to shift for ourselves.

I can see that cabin now. I can feel the dampness of the mud floor and count the patches where the plaster had fallen from the whitewashed walls. My father was a cobbler, but, our little world being largely a community of barefooted people, work was scarce. As a result we were hungry most of the time. There were various ways of supplementing the family food supply, especially in the summer when we roamed the glens and hillsides for wild fruits or set night lines in the river to catch eels. Our water supply being at a distance, I often earned bread and butter or cold potatoes by acting as water carrier for the neighbors.

Poor as we were, we had always a " sup " or a " bite " for the beggars, of whom there seemed to be an endless procession. When I was nine or ten years of age I peddled newspapers, and that added between sixpence and a shilling a week to the family exchequer. Two great events cheered our poor souls each year.

We looked forward to them as children in more favored homes look forward to Santa Claus. One was the annual Christmas Soirée of the Methodists. I had an attenuated attachment to the parish church, but I deserted the fold each year long enough to qualify for the Methodist feast. We had buns and coffee. The other event was a Christmas gift from the baker, of a currant loaf. I have often wondered why the butcher and the pawnbroker did n't chip in some moiety as well, but perhaps the volume of our business did n't warrant such benevolence.

When hunger became acute, and it often did, my mother would tell us fairy stories, stories of miraculous supply by the leprechaun. The stories were convincing, but my own last resort was to stand with my bare feet on the baker's cellar grating, or in the doorway of the bakery, and inhale the fumes of new-made bread. And that was before the advent of either Coué or Mrs. Eddy.

At " the bottom of the world," as my mother called our alley, we had as close neighbors the chimney sweeps, the local ragman, a process server, and a lot of widows and orphans and wastrels and derelicts who were uncataloguable. How they all managed to eke out existence has always been a mystery to me. One soft-headed little woman next door gave birth to a child nearly every year for a long time. This growing family became a drain on the neighbors. When advised by my mother to bring some of these barnyard fathers to a sense of responsibility, she excused them all by the statement, " Shure, th' poor craythers could n't help it." I used to envy the offspring of this little woman. Their sanitary code had no special clause relating to noses. Mine had. Every time my nose needed attention I thought of a handy leather thong which my father kept. Every time I looked at theirs I thought of it twice!

The word " poverty " inadequately describes the condition of life in that alley. It was stark destitution. We were all chronically, hopelessly hungry and utterly unconscious that there was anything unusual about it. We never complained. We never connected our condition with economic systems or governments good or bad. As a child I had an idea — dim and hazy, it is true — that things in the world were just about as God ordered them. " The Man above only knows," my father would say to some of our questionings, " and He won't let on."

Despite the rags and dirt and hunger and cold, despite the limitations, economic, physical and mental, we were, on the whole, a happy lot. We were acquainted with sorrow, but there was always more laughter than tears. The sun never took a peep into that drab stone cabin, but we had light and warmth in the personality of my mother, who radiated sweetness and cheer. We often went to bed supperless, but never without wonderful stories, of which my mother had an inexhaustible supply.

Between my seventh and fourteenth birthdays was the magic period of my youth. I used to speak of those years as wasted time. I think differently now. I was idly dreaming, getting acquainted with life — the life of birds and beasts, of men and women, of trees and flowers. I helped the fishermen on the Lough, gathered scallops, willow sticks for thatching, ran errands, sold papers, played shinny, shot marbles, spun tops, went birdnesting, whistled from pillar to post with my hands in my pockets, with a tously head of red hair and scarcely enough clothing on me to dust a violin, a thing of " shreds and patches," but dreaming — always dreaming.

In this period of dreaming I was unconsciously qualifying for usefulness. My first steady twelve-hour-a-day job involved no labor, so I had more time to dream. I was employed to guard a ten-acre field of potatoes and protect them from the crows. I was a scarecrow — and must have looked the part.

In my age of puberty occurred four outstanding events. Each made a deep impression on me. Two of them influenced my whole after life. In a potato field I lay down to rest one day. I stretched myself out at full length on my back and fell asleep. When I awoke, a very beautiful girl stood there looking at me. She was a visitor at the land steward's and I had conducted her over the trails in the woods and taught her the names of many wild flowers. I jumped to my feet and smilingly apologized. I was startled at first, and my embarrassment put out of gear the mechanism of speech. I was as startled as I had been a few days previously when at a sharp turn in the footpath in the ravine I had suddenly come upon a fawn. The beautiful thing fascinated me. I wanted a word, a word of conciliation, of kindness. Graceful as a nymph it stood there, nerve-strained like a bow bent for the discharge of an arrow, its head poised in the air, fire shooting from its eyes. It remained but an instant, then with a frightened plunge it cleared the clump of laurel bushes and disappeared.

When I stood before the beautiful city girl, I remembered the fawn and half expected the girl to vanish instantly out of sight. There was something of the fawn in her graceful form, some of the fire in her blue eyes, and in her merry laughter a suggestion of mountain and glen. Strange new emotions swept through me and I faintly realized that I had crossed the bridge that separates the boy from the man.

On another occasion, in the same field, I had an experience which seemed to raise me from the condition of an inert clod of clay to soul-consciousness. I was sitting on the fence at the close of day awaiting the ringing of the bell which called the laborers from the fields. I had been daydreaming, humming the lines of a hymn, feeling akin to all around me. A beautiful sunset made the heavens a symphony of brilliant colors. Something within responded. There was a sense of awe. I sat still and quiet, gazing in rapture at the rapidly changing scene. Suddenly an extraordinary emotion swept through my being. It seemed as if some life-giving fluid had been poured into my blood. Tears came and flowed freely. Then I was seized with a desire to cry aloud, to shout, to scream.

I rushed into the wood, fell on my knees, and began to pray. What I prayed for or about I do not know. I had heard of people acting like this under some deep conviction of sin. I had no such conviction. It seemed rather a convincement of love. Some of my friends have made various and conflicting guesses at the riddle of this experience. It is easy to err in giving a name to such things. Judged by its aftermath, it seemed to me to be the birth of a soul.

As I went through the farmyard that night on my way home, some of the workers peered into my face, and, seeing there an unusual expression, inquired in tones of amazement as to its meaning. I evaded answering their questions and sped home like the wind. That night in my little attic place beneath the roof I think I found myself. Something very beautiful had been born in my mind or heart or soul — how could I know which? I was under the spell of an afflatus. I was very happy, but afraid of sleep lest I should awaken and find it gone.

The first reaction to the new ideal was a chemical one. I wanted to be clean. Facilities were meagre. I made the most of them and began at once. Soap was cheap, water was plentiful, and the family hair comb stood the strain. I could n't quite make out what had happened, but when I went to work next morning I was in love with life. My idea of God at this period was that He was a big man in the skies. I prayed to Him for the things I considered necessary. When a new job came I looked upon the advancement as an act of the Divine, and I was grateful. I went into the hunting stables of a rich man who was a member of Parliament for our county. Here I was fitted out with clothes becoming the position of stableboy.

A year at the " big house " gave me my first insight into the life and manners of the aristocracy. It gave me also a love for horses and a knowledge of their management and care. " The Master " was a gentleman of the old school, passionately fond of fine horses. When he came into the courtyard to mount a horse he would take out of his pocket a silk handkerchief, crumple it in his hand, and then run it over the side of the horse. If the handkerchief showed the slightest sign of dust or dirt, the horse went back to the stable and the head groom was in trouble. This action made a strange impression upon me. How could I help comparing the luxurious life of a horse with the lives of the grooms, and especially with my own life? It meant much to be a horse — to have good food, a good bed, and an attendant. It meant much less to be a man.

With a new mind and a decent outfit of clothes I gravitated toward the parish church and Sunday school. I joined a Bible class, and at the end of a year, though I could neither read nor write, I had memorized more texts than anybody in the school. In an examination I took first prize for the largest number of memorized passages. When asked what I wanted for the prize I naïvely asked for a suit of clothes. The superintendent thought it a good joke. He had forgotten that I could n't read, so he gave me a book. I attended, without invitation, the vicar's Bible class which met on Monday evenings. When the members discovered that I could n't read they asked the vicar to exclude me or to keep me from asking questions. He was not inclined to do either, but I saved him from embarrassment by staying away.

There was a Y. M. C. A. Some of the respectable young men of the town got a room in the Court House and met once a week. I made known my desire to join, but I did n't measure up to the requirements socially. I was told plainly that it was for the better class of young men. The thing died shortly after I left. It must have died of respectability.

In our vicinity there was a drunken stonemason. I thought somebody should get close to him and help him to live a more human life. Failing to find anybody willing, I undertook the job myself. He signed the pledge and I organized him into the town's first temperance society, when there were only enough of us to fill the offices. It looked for a day or so as if I might be elected to something. I was doomed again to disappointment. We elected the stonemason president. It sounded nice and he was very proud of it. His effort to smooth my slightly ruffled feelings left much to be desired in talk and delicacy.

" You 're a great hand at gettin' an oul' throllop t' sign the pledge," he said, " but of coorse whin it comes to office ye 're too damned ig'rant."

In attaching myself to a sect, which was inevitable, I became engrossed in its history, creeds, and rituals. My mind was extending its frontiers; but the warmth and glow of the potato field experience seemed to fade out. I quite naturally fitted into the mutually hostile attitude of the dominant creeds.

The vicar prepared me for confirmation. Illiteracy was more than a handicap. It was a matter of shame. I had looked forward to being the support of my father and mother. That was one of my dreams; but spiritual quickening gave me discontent with ignorance. I felt that I must do something. To do it in Antrim seemed impossible. I must go away and shed my ignorance among strangers. That seemed cruel to the old people. The others had gone and were contributing nothing. I had resented that. Now I was thinking of doing the same thing.

As I walked down the aisle of the old church to receive confirmation I experienced a return of the radiance. I was poor and ignorant, but possessed of something which wealth could not buy or culture guarantee. The conflict between my dream of intelligence and my sense of duty continued and intensified. I prayed, but the heavens were silent. I stated my problem to my mother and Willie Withero, the stone-breaker.

" Ye 've got a good head, me bhoy," said the stone-breaker, " but there 's nothin' in it. Get somethin' in it or ye 'll be cleanin' oul' horses or breakin' stones, like me, for the rest of yer natural life."

" I gave ye to God before ye were born, dear," my mother said, " and it would be terrible bad manners to tell Him what to do with you." Perhaps the heavens were not silent after all.

My father was not so easily satisfied. He seemed to see in me something different and naturally wanted to hold on. He was rough-hewn, illiterate, and inefficient, but he had a great heart, and the delicacy and tenderness of his devotion to my mother were beyond praise. He was never consciously profane; but having a limited vocabulary and being unfortunate in his selection of phrases, he often said things which the more enlightened sinners deem unlawful to utter. He objected to my whistling on Sundays. Once when I told him I was whistling a hymn tune, he said he did n't care a damn what the tune was. It was the Lord's Day and if I whistled on it he would whale hell out of me. That was religious emphasis, not profanity.

He told my mother once that if the Pope or Queen

Victoria wanted their boots mended and they came five minutes after twelve Saturday night, he would n't mend them.

"Don't bother yer brains, Jamie," she replied, "they won't come."

"No," he said, "I suppose not; they 'd wear out a pair gettin' here, anyway."

The eternal controversies between the dominant religious factions bothered him.

"All this spittin' yer spleen at ayche other," he said to a bigot once, "must make God feel all throughother."

One day Mistress Mulholland came in to have her number tens repaired. She was a very large woman and had a curious habit of sucking her lips. She had small sense of humor and on questions of theology she was like Ephraim — a cake unturned. We were talking about our friend John Conlon, the process server, recently deceased. He was the only man in our little world who wore a tall hat. I asked my mother if she thought John would wear his tall hat in Heaven. She did n't think so, but the look of disappointment on my face changed her opinion. Yes, of course, there would be tall hats in Heaven, and John's would be made of gray mist! This hope, which gave me joy, had a disturbing effect on Mrs. Mulholland's mind. She smacked her thin purple lips and shot a withering look at me.

"If Misther Conlon has a tall hat," she almost hissed, " it 'll be made of cyast iron, I 'm thinkin', to kape him from the hate (heat)." This purgatorial dig raised my father's vibrations instantly. He looked appealingly at my mother, but there was no response from the chimney corner. He removed the black clay pipe from his mouth and, directing his address to me, disposed of Mistress Mulholland with a counter-suggestion. " God 's a gintleman! " he said. " He 'll look afther our John."

The fourth event was a lecture on " Lincoln, the Rail-splitter." I was still selling newspapers when this occurred. It was a very cold winter's night. Something was going on at the only hall in the town. I went there in the hope of selling the tail end of my day's supply. I was barefooted. My clothing was scant. I stood at the door with my papers under my arm and shivering with cold. The man at the door, touched, I suppose, with a sense of pity, invited me inside.

I had never heard of Lincoln. I had n't the faintest idea what a rail-splitter was; but the story of Lincoln was plainly told, and as I sat on a bench at the back of the hall, with my feet dangling six inches from the floor, I became imbued with a great ideal. The lecturer, in a series of vivid word pictures, gave us the story of Lincoln, his humble origin, his struggles for enlightenment, and his ultimate success. That night when I left the hall I had a hero in my heart.

I had also a firm conviction that I could escape from the bondage of ignorance.

At eighteen I was still a stableboy. My mind was a sort of mental haggis. As a whole it moved me forward. I had diagnosed the experience in the potato field as religion, but it had lost its radiance as I participated in the mutual hostility of the dominant creeds. I was mingling freely with men and absorbing naturally the narrow views of those around me. I had an inferiority complex and worshiped at the shrine of the conservative demigods. My mother saw the trend of my mind and warned me.

The last three months as groom or groom's helper were months of comfort. The Master had a country place on a hill by the edge of the sea. His horses and family went there every summer. His favorite horse was a distinguished racer called the Fisherman, and when I was ordered to ride him to the castle by the sea I was thrilled with the first great honor that had come my way. That ride of fifty miles was a triumphal experience. Every village I passed through turned out to see the famous horse. Every farmer felt honored when I rode into his yard for food or water. I was to use my own judgment as to time and care. This honor was not unalloyed. It created jealousy. The head groom advised that a more experienced man be sent. But the order stood. The Master was satisfied that I was competent, and he knew that I was the only man in his stables who had no use for public houses.

At the castle on the hill I was given a room. It was my first room and in it was the first bed I had ever used. A room and a bed and bathing facilities were all luxuries. They were things of a world I had not known. For a whole summer I reveled in them. I whistled and dreamed and tried to think. I had started on the long journey. I knew that never again would I return to below the animal plane of human existence. At the end of the summer, with only enough money to pay the train fare to the capital of the north, I started my pilgrimage and burned my bridges as I went along.

I did not linger long in Belfast. I became coachman for a business man who used me also to deliver goods. I did n't mind what I did. The really important thing at this temporary stopover was listening to " Roarin' Hugh Hanna " thunder his preachments from the pulpit of St. Enoch's. After a few months I moved on to the coal fields of Scotland, where I had three brothers. A fully experienced miner in those days was paid about four shillings for a twelve-hour day. I became a miner's mucker at one shilling a day. The work was hard, exacting, and dangerous. The contrast between this blackened underworld and the freedom and sunshine of my last three months in Ireland was very sharp. We worked half naked. We wore little oil lamps on our brows. In a few days my face was blistered, my body racked with pain. We worked like beasts and behaved like animals. I did n't mind that in the pit, but the sordidness of the shack we lived in and the brutality and vulgarity of the life around me made the place to me a hell on earth.

Keir Hardie and Bob Smilie were stirring the sluggish souls of men in that very region at that time. I had no social conscience. I could only see my own problem — the conquest of ignorance. There were times when the difficulties seemed to paralyze all effort. I became discouraged often, but never caved in. One night I was passing a drab, cheerless-looking building and curiosity carried me in. A tall, princely-looking young man clad in a gray suit was addressing about a hundred miners. The talk was over my head, but the personality of the man thrilled me. The man was Professor Henry Drummond — one of God's signposts. I had five minutes' conversation with him after the meeting, and the next morning, with about as much baggage as I could stuff in my hat, I went into the wilderness of Glasgow.

There was romance in roaming the streets by night and doggedly searching for work during the day; but when a day's rain soaked me and hunger had reduced my energy to exhaustion, the romance vanished. I could neither beg nor steal. In such a condition I went to the docks one night in the hope of creeping under cover somewhere, somehow. An empty dry-goods case seemed a hopeful relief. I put my hand in. It rested on a human head. In Gothic language a Scotch voice ordered me off the earth. Courtesy and culture are wonderful things when one can afford them. That night I had none to spare. Like a bundle of wet rags I dumped myself in on top of this human. Then followed in Scotch and Irish a conversation accompanied by all the pothooks and hangers in the physical alphabet. When it was over we were both very warm and somewhat smeared. Together we occupied that dry-goods hotel for the night and together next morning went in search of the gayly bedecked men who were fishing in the muddy waters of the city for just such fish as we were.

The origin of the impulsive move occurred in the night. Sitting there stewing in the juice of unfortuitous circumstances, an idea came to me. I remembered that in our town a young man became a soldier. He could neither read nor write. Five years later he returned. He had been transformed. He could read and write, he walked straight, — nobody else in the town could, — and he shaved every day. It was an illumination. I became enthusiastic and longed for daylight.

When I spoke of my plans to my fellow guest he thought that he might accompany me at least to the rendezvous, but after that I was to go my own way and he would go his. He had a reputation to sustain — his father was a hearse-driver. At the rendezvous he changed his mind. He would take a chance on me. We would enlist together. So we did, but we had difficulty in selecting just what we wanted. All branches of the service were represented: Cavalry, Infantry, Artillery. I could n't distinguish between a Horse-guardsman and a stovepipe. I had never seen such a glorious display of color, swords, bayonets, and sashes, dangling and clanking. We were as pleased as children in a toy shop. They walked up and they walked down. They twirled their little canes and pulled at the wisps on their upper lips.

" Let 's join this! " I ventured, as a ponderous being in red and gold strode down toward us.

" What dae ye think it is? " he asked.

" God knows," I said, " but did ye iver see anything finer in yer life? "

He never did, so we took the Queen's shilling and were shipped off to the depot. We imagined the swanky being we chose was a Guardsman, but he was n't. He was a red marine, so we had joined neither the Army nor the Navy. This Scotchman had a genius for theological phrases. He spent much of their force on me for weeks, imagining I had prevented him from selecting a crack regiment.

II

THE EDUCATION OF A ROYAL MARINE

I HAD one object in entering the service. I never for a moment lost sight of it. I wanted a school, and here it was. From the military point of view it was an unnecessary frill, but the Marine Corps had made it an efficient branch of the training. By a blunder I had stumbled into the best school in the whole of the British service.

I was one of twenty men in a large room, each with a cot bed and space for his kit. We ate together, drilled together, and fitted as best we could into each other's lives. Most of them were rough specimens. I was dubbed " sky pilot " before I had been there a week. I was rather slow in assimilating military knowledge, but in school I absorbed what they gave me as a sponge absorbs water. I made a record. But I was n't there to be a scholar. I was a soldier in the making, and they had their own peculiar methods of reminding me of it. I was at the training depot for a year. My body responded to discipline and training. The constant drill, with gymnastic exercises, whipped me into shape in a short time. My mind responded with less alacrity to words of command on the drill field. There used to be an idea that before a man could be made a good soldier it was necessary to break his spirit. A later idea was that if a man had any spirit he could be aroused out of incompetence and lethargy by a thrashing. I was an easy victim of the new idea.

A boxing instructor was told off to attend to this. Under pretext of teaching me how to box, he pasted me all over the floor, to the amusement of three hundred men. In my case the experiment was successful. I was more than awakened. I was a nonresistant from principle and a soldier from necessity, but the humiliation awakened the animal in me and I set aside the principle for the time being. There was a young Scotsman in our room who knew the boxing game so well that he found it difficult to persuade any of his roommates to practise with him. I offered myself as a punching bag. He saw my eagerness and knew my nature, so he charged me sixpence a lesson. I did n't mind the sixpence, but I had an appetite in those days, the memory of which makes me hungry even now. I needed the Queen's allowance of money to supplement her limited rations. After six weeks' training I went back, and in an Irish brogue which I could n't even imitate now I asked for another lesson from the boxing instructor.

In this comeback I did n't box. I had no intention of boxing. I just unleashed the tiger in my blood and played the jungle man. I fought eighteen rounds that night, but with six different men. I was master of the floor in every session. I became a savage. I enjoyed a savage's delight and received a savage's reward — cheap applause. I recovered. I recovered on my knees down by the Goodwin Sands, where by divine help I resolved to tie up the tiger.

When I arrived at corps headquarters my record from the training station testified to efficiency and good character. I was thankful then, I am thankful now, for that chance to develop my mind and body. Perhaps only those who emerge out of great social depths fully appreciate cleanliness, comparative comfort, and the opportunity to develop the mind. The passion for learning grew. I loved life. I exulted in access to books. I had a childlike delight in beautiful things.

A few outstanding events occurred during my brief stay in a garrison town. I read my first novel, I heard a great orator, I saw Irving play Hamlet, and I had a thrilling experience with prayer. My first novel was *John Halifax, Gentleman.* When as yet I was but learning to read I had been advised to read it. In a box marked " 3d. each " at a bookseller's door I found a copy. The poverty and illiteracy of the hero's youth were like my own. He became my first hero in fiction. Little bits of the book wove themselves into the texture of my life. John and the cripple boy are sitting behind a high yew hedge. The boy asks John what he would do if he were shut in all around by such a hedge — he could n't climb it, he could n't break through.

" I 'd begin and break it twig by twig, till I forced my way through to the other side."

The world of knowledge was to me so big, so overwhelming, that I often despaired of ever knowing much about it. This idea of John's, " twig by twig," was a tremendous impetus. The yew hedge was my wall of ignorance. I would break through it in the same way.

Trying to read Shakespeare at my stage of development was like beginning to build a house at the chimney. I could n't read him at all.

One night I heard Henry Irving play Hamlet. It was the first play I had ever seen in a theatre. I was tremendously moved. Next day I secured a copy of the play and in a few more weeks had memorized it from beginning to end. Irving had opened the door.

I heard all the great orators of the later Victorian period and the early part of the present century. The greatest of them all was Charles Bradlaugh, the atheist. One Sunday afternoon I was one of several thousand who listened to him as he endeavored to demolish the idea of God. The foundations of my faith had a rude shaking. I was probably the most ignorant person in that assembly, but when the speaker volunteered to answer questions I arose in my place and awaited recognition. It seemed a mile to where he stood on the platform. I was in scarlet uniform.

He saw me and called for my question. I was so scared that words would n't come. I seemed choked. Imagining that my voice was merely low, he invited me to the platform. I suppose the sight of my uniform reminded him of the days when he had worn such an outfit himself. He saw my embarrassment and laid his hand affectionately on my shoulder. Encouraged, I said my little piece — brief, pointed.

"I have a hope in my heart which inspires and gives me joy. I call it God. Would Mr. Bradlaugh take it away from me and put nothing in its place?"

He might have, could have, given a scathing answer. He did n't.

"No, my lad," he said. "Charles Bradlaugh would be the last man on earth to take a pleasure from a soldier lad, even though it be a belief in God." There were giants in those days, and Bradlaugh was one of them.

I learned that fifty men were to be drafted for the Mediterranean fleet and that I was to be one of them. Only one thing interested me in this outlook: which of the ships had the best library? The flagship, I was told, had the best library of any ship afloat. I prayed that God would have me sent there. God was the big man in the skies who knew everybody. My prayer was a sort of *ex parte* bargain that if He would give me the education which the big ship could furnish I would give him all my life. My faith was childlike, simple, and primitive. Somehow I felt sure that my prayer would be answered. When the roll was called and our ship assignments made, I was detailed for a gunboat which had no library and few men. I was so amazed that I had courage — the courage of desperation — to ask if there was n't some mistake. I was threatened with punishment for questioning the roll call. To my simple mind the wheel of life had slipped a cog — several cogs. I was in despair, but consoled myself with the thought that God was punishing me for being too sure or for something else I had done in my ignorance.

The following day, after our parade and inspection, the color sergeant called my name. A mistake had been made, so he said, and I was to join the flagship! I partly exploded there and then, and fully exploded in my barrack room, where in a twinkling I divested myself of kit and accoutrements and offered to fight any two men in the room, just to show how kindly I felt toward the world! There was a roar of laughter, but no fighters. I explained and shouted, " Hurrah for God! " Childish? Oh yes, very childish; but I go back to that period often and wonder.

The flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet was at that time the most powerful man-o'-war in the British Navy. The chief use or function of such a ship was far removed from my consciousness. To me it was a little world peopled with men and guns. It was a city of the sea, with classes and grades, and streets and alleys and avenues. Down below the water line were the slums where we kept our stores. Above the water line everything was spotlessly clean. The decks were white, the brass work shining, and the guns polished. We even kept the shells polished.

There was a large library. There was a school for junior officers, and above all there were distinctive personalities among the officers. The chaplain functioned, but he did n't count. He was a thoroughly educated nobody.

The fifteen men in my mess were all good fellows, though rough and vulgar. Conversation usually wallowed in obscenity and profanity. The absence of either set a man apart, as odd, a " sky pilot," or effeminate. It was not easy to be unaffected by the constant impact of these blistering words. A little knowledge of psychology would have helped considerably; but I knew nothing about it. We had a small group of Bible students — fundamentalists, and then some. I became one of them, but they were constantly deploring my worldliness, which consisted of a jubilant nature, hearty laughter, fairy stories, quick wit in repartee, and my inability to take literally their creeds. Life to them seemed an evil to be endured. To me it was an urn of joy.

I needed but four hours' sleep — never slept more until I was over fifty years of age. Four hours of work or duty and sixteen for study. When I hid myself behind a stanchion in order to listen to the school-master, I was discovered and forced to explain. The explanation secured for me help in my most difficult study. I had observed since my earliest mental awakenment the slovenly use of language. I determined to speak English correctly. In order to take full advantages of the opportunities around me I became a waiter. The English language was spoken as purely and correctly by the officers I served as in any university faculty. I had a pad and pencil handy and jotted down words which were strange and new to me. Under a night lamp in the flats below, when the crew were asleep, I made their acquaintance with the aid of a dictionary. I had an Irish brogue. I made strenuous efforts to shed it. I memorized ten pages at a time of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice,* and when ashore would repeat them aloud in some solitary place.

At the end of the first year I occupied a niche in that little world. We were constantly cruising around the Mediterranean. To me it was a dream world. The histories of those countries on its borders were full of romance. Before we entered a port I had made myself acquainted with its history. Half the crew looked to me for information on the places we visited. When we reached the Piræus I had special leave to visit Athens. One night in Greek waters I was doing duty for a comrade on the upper deck — sentry duty. A man in evening dress came from the Admiral's cabin and walked back and forth with me for half an hour. He seemed amazed that a common marine should be acquainted with Greek history. I had been ashore and was going again. He asked if I had visited the Palace, and I told him that the ruins of the age of Pericles were of more interest.

" You must see the Palace," he said. " I will give you a card which will admit you."

I did n't look at it just then — it was really a little scrap of paper on which I supposed he had written his name. When I politely asked him his name, he said, " George." Next morning I discovered that I had been talking to a king.

With a passion for knowledge, abundance of books, and sixteen hours a day at my disposal, I made progress. In reading I averaged a novel a day. A third assistant steward taught me Italian. In the rudiments of French a midshipman was my teacher. I absorbed as much knowledge from persons and places as from books. When the fleet lay at anchor outside Joppa, I was given special leave to visit the Holy Land. The journey from Joppa to Jerusalem in those days was full of thrills. For a simple-minded peasant lad, devoted to religion, the visit to the scenes of the life of Jesus was of the nature of an intensified exaltation. Everything that had happened to me since my awakenment seemed a special providence. This visit seemed to cap the climax of all privileges.

While off Limasol in Cyprus I had a vacation during which I saw Ohnefalch–Richter, the German archæologist, digging for the remains of ruined empires. Thirteen civilizations were buried there. When on the coast of Asia Minor I went boar hunting in the wilds and visited the tomb of Polycarp on the way back. The Adriatic and Ægean Seas were books of ancient history perused in a leisurely cruise which lasted six months. We touched every land bordering on the great sea, and each had its own story, running back into the origin of nations and races. No university could offer such educational facilities, yet I was the only man in a crew of a thousand who was taking full advantage of them. The men of the rank and file could tell all about the number and variety of saloons, brothels, and amusements. Of historic values or the life of the nations we visited they knew nothing.

Nearly one hundred per cent of soldiers and sailors come from the slums of the great cities. They join when they can't find work, when they don't want work, and when they seek adventure. A uniform makes no change in human nature. They are beset with temptations peculiar to seafaring men. In the Navy, men in the full vigor of the animal nature are herded closely together for long periods. That means a fight for continence in which most men fail. The way Navy boys of about twelve or fourteen years of age are dressed involves a constant sex appeal to older men. That, in all navies of the world, means sodomy. This perversion is one of the cankers that we cover

over with a veil of absolute silence. With this crime the British Navy deals ruthlessly. But it persists. Another fight is the struggle with liquor.

My ceaseless activity used up my physical and mental energy to such an extent that I had none left for these things. Which does not mean that I was immune. No human being can listen to endless sex talk and invidious sex suggestions without being affected. My passion for knowledge saved my body and gave me an invaluable training at the same time. I did not suffer unto blood, but I did escape as by fire.

Our commander was a seaman of the old school. He loved sail drill in rough weather. I think I hear him now: "Stand by! Away aloft! Bear out on the yardarm!" The day when the order to bear out on the yardarm was given, the captain of the foretop lost his nerve or his grip and dropped dead on the deck at my feet. The evolution was suspended. Next day we began the same drill. When the same order was given the new captain bungled somehow and fell to the deck in the same manner. We buried them together in old Famagusta that afternoon. The next day we went at the same evolution. The new captain was a jovial chap who was one of the best seamen in the Navy; but often when he went ashore he forgot the name of his ship and the number of his mess. Drink was his master. He had been sober for a long time and was again eligible for promotion. He was made captain of the foretop, but the superstition of the sea gripped us all — two men out, the third *had* to go! But the new captain did n't go. He performed his stuff and came down full of laughter. He was probably the most popular man on the ship. We all wanted to hug him as he descended the rigging with the agility of a cat.

A few days later I got a side light on his success. One of our officers was entertaining a friend from another ship. At tea the visitor asked if we had a man on board called Hicks. He was informed we had.

" We were thirty miles out at sea the other night when I saw a light flashing on the dark clouds," he said, " and I told our signalman to take down the code. This is what he gave me: —

> "God, this is Billy Hicks. I ain't afraid of no bloomin' man nor devil. I ain't afraid of no Davy Jones's bleedin' locker, neither. I don't ask for no favors but just one. This is it. When I strikes the foretops to-morrow let me do it with the guts of a man what is clean; and God, dear God, from this-'ere day give me the feelin' I used to have long ago when I knelt at my mother's knee and said 'Our Father.' Good night, dear God."

Hicks had been a signalman, and when the superstition of the " third " man seized him he sought help from the clouds. I kept track of him for some years. He became a chief petty officer.

Nobody on the ship knew that I could give an account of myself, if extended in self-defense. I had fenced, but never boxed. One day the bully of the mess deck called me a name which reflected on my mother — a name as common in these men's conversation as " Yes " or " No." I just was n't in the mood to take it. Resentment filled me and found expression. He rushed at me. I pushed him back and challenged him to a finish fight after dinner. There never has been anything either shrewd or subtle about me, but I had gumption enough to know that as cook of the mess that day he would guzzle all the grog he could get and I needed all the advantage possible. The real advantage over him, however, was clean living and quick thinking. He had n't fought a round for over a year. He was full of grog and overfed. It was all over in seven sessions. I was committing to memory that week the names of the Minor Prophets and in the fifth session I pounded at him with Hosea! Joel! Amos! and all down the line. There were hundreds of men looking on, and this strange mixture of Scripture and fisticuffs was very amusing to them. I offered to call it a draw when I had him wobbling, but he doggedly fought on and I had to finish him. We became very good friends later, and I wrote all his love letters.

I had seen General Gordon in Alexandria on his way to the Sudan. When he was hemmed in at Khartum and Osman Digna was leading his native troops against the British in the desert beyond Suakin, over half of my comrades were sent to the front. Being a waiter and batman, I was not drafted. Some months later an officer was drafted. His servant was passé and somewhat faded physically. I offered him my bank account to let me go in his place. As he was considering offering his savings for a substitute, he was easily persuaded, and off I went to the relief of Gordon.

Some poisoned arrows have been shot at the character of General Gordon in these latter days. What he was in reality I do not know. I do know that among us common rank-and-file fighting men his name had a magic spell. Our devotion to the soldier-saint was based more on the saint than on the soldier. We loved the man and were willing to die for him. When we heard that he had been killed in Khartum we were grief-stricken and had no more interest in fighting the Arabs. We drove Osman Digna into the hills and scattered his men, but we had no hatred. These wild Fuzzy-wuzzies came out with their long spears and shields and obsolete rifles, met us, and fought us with a courage that seemed to us madness.

I was attached to the staff of General Sir Gerald Graham, V.C. To me the glorious thing about Graham was his chaste use of English. The fighting was easy. Our most deadly foe was the sun. He killed one out of every two or three of us. Water was scarce. We had a pint a day. Our laundry methods were unique. We used to roll our shirts up, tie them tightly, and pound them with the butt end of a rifle.

My only reading matter in the desert was a pocket

Testament and a small copy of Chapman's Homer. Even here I was in the school of life. I had time to think. I formed the habit of closing my eyes and bringing before me in panorama the historical pageantry of Greece and Rome and Palestine. I was never idle. I had sunstroke, and later a touch of fever, but I recovered so quickly that I was not removed. I had made maps of the fortified locations of the Arabs, and one night when an important dispatch had to be sent to an outlying fort I was assigned, with a guard, to carry it. A very slight thing. I knew every yard of the way. Weeks later I learned to my amazement that my name had figured in dispatches. A step toward promotion — if I wanted it.

When the long, dreary campaign was over I returned with the troops and in boyish glee enjoyed the momentary glory which such a return always involves. Military glory seemed a shallow thing to me. I could see through it. I saw through it all. I was more grateful than words can express — grateful for the chance of an education, grateful for association with officers and men. Now I had earned it. The score was as even as I could make it, and I wanted to move on; but the way was not yet open. I spent seven years in uniform. Those years were full of thrills, full of growth, full of valuable experience. I matriculated into Oxford as a passman and remained long enough to know Dr. Benjamin Jowett and to fall in love with the most fascinating city on earth. I had n't the money or the social prestige. I was a square peg in a round hole. I felt it in every fibre of my being, and I was ill at ease all the brief time I was there. Dr. Jowett had wisdom. He advised me, and once again I was out on my pilgrimage — literally without either scrip or staff.

When I returned to Antrim I had an incentive, an ambition. I had mentioned it once to the vicar, but his faith in me was small and he discouraged me — said it was impossible. In a letter he had told me of a friend of his who was on board one of the ships of the Mediterranean Squadron, but he did n't mention its name. Of course I searched the Navy list, and I discovered that this friend was the nephew of " the Master." I knew the lad well. Perhaps he might have been glad to know that I was on a sister ship. The poor fellow was already on a course of life which led to destruction. I was on the other tack, struggling to a life of usefulness.

I could tell my mother of my ambition. She understood and had faith in me. I wanted to be a missionary or a minister in order to help men. My mother had given me a name in baptism which means " helper of men." I did n't know then that to my sainted mother good-bye was farewell.

" We shall meet again, Mother," I said as I was leaving.

" Oh, aye, dear, we shall — out there beyond the meadows and the clouds."

III

NEW YORK AND WORSE

WHEN I landed in New York I had one dollar in my pocket. My other assets were a strong body, a willing mind, and faith in God. I might perhaps add that I had faith in myself. The usual thing is to carry letters of introduction, certificates of character, and records of service. Never in my life have I used any of these. I have never once asked anybody to recommend me for anything, anywhere.

During my first few months in New York, I had difficulties — many of them — in finding work. I presented myself as a workingman. When they asked for documents I moved on. I stayed with a friend for a few weeks, but, feeling that I was wearing out my welcome, I went out to face the situation alone. Poverty and hunger drove me to the Bowery. All day long on utterly cold days I tramped the streets looking for work, and, not finding it, slunk back into the abyss to find shelter in doorways, " dead houses," and night missions.

One very cold night I went into what is called a " dead house " — a saloon where for the expenditure of five cents one might stand against the back wall all night. Poor homeless wretches huddled closely together went to sleep on their feet. The air was stifling, the odor of human bodies nauseating. After a little while the bartender called me to account — I had n't spent the five-cent minimum. I had n't five cents to spend. I went over to the bar and told him my story. I was frozen to the marrow and had come in to get warm. If he would let me stay I would give recitations from Shakespeare. My voice impressed him, but in the belief that I was spoofing him he invited me to show him what I could do. For half an hour I gave selections from *Hamlet.* Then I took the text, " Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and gave a homily on it. When I finished a tramp came forward and offered to pay for my five-cent beer. The bartender offered me the price of a bed. I refused both, and stood there with the " dead " for the remaining hours of the night.

" Who was your last employer ? " was the first question of every agency and every " Y " employment secretary. To one of the latter when he asked the stereotyped question I answered, " Queen Victoria." I took from my pocket a silver medal bearing the Queen's image and on the edge my name. " That 's no good," he said. " Don't you know anybody else ? "

" Yes, but His name is no good in getting jobs ? "

" Who ? "

" God."

" If you knew God you would n't be looking for a job," he said.

"I think you are mistaken, brother," I replied. "He may be using me for a few weeks as an acid test of New York's religion."

My first job was of a temporary character. It was shoveling ashes in a public school. Later I was assistant porter in a Broadway store. I ran an elevator for a while — a boy's job with a boy's pay. Digging with a sewer gang paid better, and driving a milk wagon better still. I asked John Masefield once what he was doing at this period, and he told me that he was working in a restaurant on Eighth Avenue. "How queer," I said, "that when Gorki was in a tubercular bakeshop in Moscow, Jack London was an oyster pirate on San Francisco Bay, you were slinging hash on Eighth Avenue, and I was driving a milk cart past your door every day!"

It was in that experience in the potato field that a love of beauty was born in me. As the spiritual element impelled me toward the church, so this æsthetic impulse drew me toward art. I was a milkman when Tissot came to Brooklyn with his collection of Palestine pictures. I arranged with the milk company to give me an afternoon off in order to see them. In order to find the gallery in Brooklyn I had to use the telephone. I had never used one before. I paid my nickel and proceeded.

After a while the drug clerk asked me if I had come to *repair* it. Very much abashed and ashamed, I confessed my ignorance.

“ Is this the Brooklyn Gallery of Fine Arts? ” I asked timidly, when shown how to use it.

“ Yes.”

“ Will you kindly tell me how to get there? ” There was a gurgling sound followed by: —

“ Where in hell are you? ”

“ Oh, I ’m not in Brooklyn,” I said; “ I ’m in New York, near the City Hall.”

One morning I drove my milk cart out of bounds, downtown to the door of a publishing house. They were making a new dictionary and had advertised for men who could do that kind of work. The publisher looked rather dubious when he saw my milk-bespattered clothes. Five minutes’ conversation resulted in my being employed as one of the first three men to make the Standard Dictionary.

Lexicography, however, was n’t within the scope of my ambition. I had made up my mind to command a salary sufficiently large to convince any missionary organization that my application for religious work was not motivated by financial considerations. When the time was ripe I applied for the appointment of Bowery Missionary — to me the most attractive field in the world of missions. The salary was sixty dollars a month — ten dollars more than one fourth of what the publisher paid me.

The Bowery that I knew has disappeared. Only the shell remains. It was the home of gunmen, thugs, pickpockets, and worse. All the dime museums were there. There were fifty lodging houses, where a bed cost from ten to twenty-five cents, fake auctions, fake stores, and every variety of song and dance hall. Rather a drab, dead place in the day, it awoke in the night and great arc lights fizzed and sputtered overhead outside the shop windows. Crowds surged up and down it all night long and visitors from afar mingled with the throngs — some to satisfy their curiosity, others to sample the various forms of painted pravity.

It was said by city authorities that in and around the Bowery there were forty thousand homeless men. The magnitude of the problem was overwhelming at first. When the weather was good they were on the streets; when it was bad they were in the lodgings. With a small Bible in my hand, I went in and out of these lodging houses. I began each day at two in the afternoon and continued, with an interval for a meal, until two next morning. At first I tried to read the Scriptures to each man I talked with. They did n't want the Bible. They were in misery, out of work, living from hand to mouth, and in need of everything that sustains life. I changed my methods and went into the places as one of themselves. Everyone had a story to tell and wanted somebody to listen. I became a listener — a good listener. When I listened to a man's story he was ready to listen to me. Everybody wanted employment. They were all in need of clothes. They were never sure of a lodging. The appeal — a silent appeal generally — was for what I had n't to give. I had ideas, but no jobs; sympathy, but no money.

I could fit them out with the whole armor of God, but they were shivering in the cold and needed something to cover their nakedness.

I had many calls to speak about the work, in churches and colleges. D. L. Moody invited me to tell his student conference about it at Northfield. There I met Professor Henry Drummond, who had lifted me as a lame dog over a stile when I was a miner. Church people gave me old clothes, and money for meal tickets and lodging. But the best they did hardly touched the problem.

One Sunday I addressed a large congregation among whom sat Grover Cleveland, ex-President. " It may surprise you to know," I said in closing, " that I have too many converts. When a man is converted I feel it is up to me to help him readjust himself in society. I appreciate your old clothes and your collection; but if a dozen of you business men would get together and devise some scheme such as a farm colony or a diversified workshop, where these men could regain their self-respect through self-support, you would solve a great problem and prevent a great waste of life."

After the service the superintendent of my society reprimanded me. He was sorry I had made the suggestion. "Your job is to save souls," he said, "and let other people attend to worldly matters."

The fact of the Bowery played havoc with my theories. The assumption that God was n't interested in the maelstrom of life, this abyss of dirt, disease, and destitution, was to my mind stupid. I selected a bunkhouse at Chatham Square as my headquarters. It was one of those places where a man dropped seven cents into a tin box at the door and walked into a huge dormitory. There were strips of canvas stretched from beams to the walls, and a man could lie on one of them — or on the floor.

It was a filthy place. I proceeded to clean it. The missionary on his knees with soap and water created a sensation. From the next church I addressed I secured magazines and papers. I visited the place daily. I held services there every Sunday. At first I piloted my wastrels to a mission church on the West Side. The minister, finding himself swamped with my undesirables, revolted. His people, who were working people, did n't care to get mixed up with "bums from the Bowery." That was human, understandable, common, and, of course, less than Christian. A very old church on the East Side was pastorless. I was asked to preach there until the New York Presbytery could sell it and devote the money to uptown churches. I undertook the work, and not only revived it for working-class people, but made it the centre for my Bowery work.

I inaugurated a campaign among Presbyterians to save the old church for that community. It was in the Ghetto, but there were enough Protestants there to fill a score of churches. We assumed an attitude of service toward the community which gave us at once the coöperation of both Jews and Catholics. We established in the church one of the first kindergartens — if not the very first — in the city. We made it clear to people around us that no attempt would be made to stick our peculiar labels on their children. We established lecture courses to which people of all creeds and classes came.

When a financial panic caused intense suffering in our congested centre, I invited the ministers of all denominations to get together and start a restaurant where food could be had at cost. It takes a famine or an earthquake to get Jew, Protestant, and Catholic together on any pretext. We actually did form a committee and start relief work. To the Catholic priest I ventured the opinion that if it took a panic or a pestilence to get us together we ought to have one every year.

In coöperation with the University Settlement, which was then in its infancy, we invited the leading economists, sociologists, and reformers to address the people. Among them were Henry George and Father McGlynn — both enemies of privilege and injustice, and therefore looked upon with suspicion by some of those who helped us to pay the bills.

I attacked the Tammany politicians, grafters, and saloon keepers. I defended the pushcart men from their exploiters. I organized country parties in the summer and formed a baseball league among the Sunday schools of poor churches. Saloon keepers were a power in those days. Many spasmodic attempts were made by zealous anti-this, that, and the other societies, temperance, religious, and political. Dr. Parkhurst formed a society and inaugurated a crusade. I joined it and attacked Tammany in the stronghold. With some of his lieutenants Dr. Parkhurst went on a tour of inspection. What he saw horrified the church world. One Sunday night I took three elders with me and went through the saloons and brothels. The chairman of the Grand Jury had announced that Parkhurst and his agents had lied. I appeared before him one Monday morning with proof that his own saloons were wide open on Sunday. I presented him with bottles of whiskey I had bought from his own bartenders. I objected to his sitting in judgment on himself. The Assistant District Attorney undertook to make me look ridiculous.

" Buying whiskey on Sunday is n't the sort of thing we usually associate with the office of a preacher," he said.

" Quite true," I said; " nor is the defense of lawbreaking the sort of thing we usually associate with the office of the District Attorney. If I wanted the whiskey for myself I should n't be here presenting it to the chairman of the Grand Jury! "

" Do you mean to insinuate — "

" No, I don't," I interrupted. " I charge — definitely charge on oath! "

But I might just as well have taken a bouquet of flowers with an address of thanks. No action was taken.

These spurts of reform were pan-flashes of moral indignation. They all failed. I am not sure that they deserved to succeed. Like others, I was consumed with zeal in those days, but I 'm afraid there was small appreciation of the real situation. We had a rather naïve notion that the sermons of a brilliant rhetorician, delivered before a small, wealthy congregation, were making an impression upon the immorality of the day. We were sincere, but we were quite mistaken. This congregation and their minister lived in quite another world. When some of them came to live in the slums in settlements, the sacrifice was duly heralded and accounted to them for righteousness. The settlement workers were all sincere, good people. They took themselves rather seriously, and always overestimated their importance. The people of the tenements called settlement workers " hired neighbors."

One of the men I had picked up on the Bowery became my janitor in that old church. He succeeded me as Bowery Missionary, and is there yet. Another man who was one of my first converts in a seven-cent bunkhouse joined the staff of the church and spent ten or twelve years as a quiet visitor of the poor. He was a quaint man who had served as a soldier in India. When I found him he was an umbrella mender. He was the saintliest man I have ever known. I called him " my Saint Francis of the Ghetto."

I tried to interest the Board of Health in the Bowery lodging houses. It was hopeless. Police inspectors had described them as " breeding places of crime." I described them as " culture stations of disease." My plea was for sanitation. Failing with the Board, I interested some Wall Street men. They appointed a committee. The committee sent a man to Boston to investigate Boston's Municipal Lodging. I knew what would happen. He would get an annual report and have a good time. I dressed as a tramp and went to Boston. I asked a policeman where I could get a shelter for the night. He sent me to a police station, where I was given a ticket for the institution. I went there, and after a third-degree examination I was put into a bathing room while my clothes were steamed. Next morning I chopped wood for several hours for my breakfast, which consisted of a bowl of gruel and a biscuit. The biscuit could have been kicked for miles without showing an indentation. When the member of the committee gave his report I gave mine. They were quite different. I recommended the adoption of the Boston scheme. Nothing came of this for years. One Sunday night I gave an address on the work on the Bowery and asked if there was n't a rich man in the audience who would build a large lodging house and be content with a five-per-cent dividend from it. D. O. Mills was in that audience, and after mulling over the idea for many moons he decided to build a hotel where a man could get a bed for twenty-five cents.

Some years after I had left the work in the slums I paid my quarter in a Mills hotel — just to feel the influence of a dream realized, or an idea materialized. I spent one of the liveliest nights of my life. The bed was alive — regiments, squadrons, of bedbugs traversed the surfaces of my body like creeping fire. The hotel was all right. What was needed was a scheme by which the guests could be baked, boiled, or steamed before they retired.

Settlements in the Ghetto are casualty clearing stations. Workers are Red Cross men and women. Churches in a small degree keep the smouldering fires of ancient religions alive. But the total sum of all their efforts is negligible. The soul of the Ghetto expressed itself in the Yiddish press. It awakened me to a consciousness of life as a whole. In a seething whirlpool of human life I readjusted myself. Creeds and dogmas and superstitions fell from me like autumn leaves. I needed a new field, but I should never have sought one had not a domestic tragedy crushed out of me even the desire to live. A few months later I found myself in a Western city, soul-seared, in mental chaos, and in utter spiritual darkness. In a squatter settlement on the banks of a river I rented a shack and tried to readjust myself in the scheme of things.

In the settlement were about five hundred people — men, women, and children. The innate desire to help people was greater than my doubts and pushed them aside. I gathered the children around me nearly every afternoon for an hour and told them stories. I organized a Sunday school and taught them about God — in whom I no longer believed myself. Religion was an illusion. It had done me good. It would do these children good, and there was a chance that they would never be disillusioned. They were nearly all foreigners, and, while they were not connected with any churches, they had inherited religious ideas, and also inherited prejudices. Some of the elders became alarmed, but a closer acquaintance gave them confidence. On Sunday evenings I gathered the parents together and talked to them. I straightened them out. I was especially helpful to them in illness. There was a gang of young thieves. They had a boat on the river and a cave in a clump of bushes. I invaded them — kindly, as a friend — and the band broke up.

I was giving light, but in darkness myself; giving incentives to all around me, and losing all incentive, all ambition, myself. I became morbid. I calmly, deliberately, determined to wind up and quit life. I destroyed everything which would identify me. Then I went to the river. It was a moonlight night. A man sat on a log by the river, smoking. He had spent twelve hours in a slaughterhouse. His clothing was saturated with the blood of beasts. He lived like a beast. I sat beside him and we talked. He had a dim conception of life's meaning and purpose. It was better than mine, but I was fixed in my purpose. After he left I sat on a few minutes, thinking. I heard a loud scream. I turned my head, and saw flames bursting out of a second-story window — the only two-story shack in the colony. I ran to the place and by quick thinking saved a woman and three children. Then I deliberately decided to get suffocated in smoke and perish with the building. When I came back to life many hours later I was on my cot in my shack. The place was full of anxious people. My yard outside was full of children. When I was able to move, a newspaper sent me to the mountains of Colorado. Here I regained my faith in God and in humanity.

I returned to the squatter colony. I made an appeal for funds and built a chapel — the Chapel of the Carpenter. I organized a church in the city and was ordained its minister. I organized a settlement and persuaded college students to spend their summer vacations in it. I am condensing into a few sentences a year of activity which was full of thrills. They had a system in that city which was worse than anything I had found in New York. They segregated the " social evil." All the houses of prostitution were in one district. Most of them were owned by church people. The city levied a fine on each prostitute and the fines went into the school fund. It could truly be said that the more debauched we were the more efficiently the city could educate its children. One minister made war on this system and became so unpopular in his congregation that he had to leave the city. Both old parties were, on this question, hopeless. The Knights of Labor had just come into being. I joined them, and at the first city convention I deliberately worked to get my name on the resolutions committee. To my amazement the committee refused to present my resolution. I made a minority report, and the convention passed it overwhelmingly.

The passing of the resolution meant little. It did show that there existed a civic conscience, and that was as much as I hoped to accomplish. The cost of that action was high. The newspapers bombarded me for the rest of my sojourn. Despite all opposition, however, I left some memorials of my pilgrimage. The most outstanding of these was the conversion of a college student who became, and still is, one of the most useful ministers in America.

My initiation into the confidence of the young outlaws of the " Bottoms," as the region was called, was a ludicrous incident. It occurred while as yet I was unknown. I was out of money, out of food, short of everything. Turning out my clothes, I found two cents. I went uptown and bought two rather shopworn bananas. I ate one and put the other in my hip pocket. It was dark when I went home. Just as I was going under the railway bridge I saw two figures — very dimly — cross the road. I pulled the banana out of my pocket and rushed them. " Hands up, or I 'll blow your brains out! " I said as I leveled the banana at them. Up went their hands — a gun in one of them. I took the gun. They recognized me at once, as I did both of them when I looked closely into their faces.

" Thought you never carried a gun," one of them said.

" I don't," I answered. " It 's a banana." We all laughed heartily. They took me to their cave, and the hold-up with my supper was the beginning of the end of youthful outlawry in that region.

IV

A MISSIONARY AT LARGE

A YEAR in a small town in Iowa — minister of the largest church there — gave me an inside experience of the small-town problem. Too many churches, too many ministers, too little religion. From there I went to Cleveland, where for a year I had charge of a temperance institution. A committee composed wholly of women managed the place. I could n't use their ideas, and they were afraid of mine. So the thing petered out. An old Irishwoman who attended some of my meetings became enthused with new ideas of religion. One night she was bubbling over and wanted to speak. She was very Irish and very illiterate. She had never spoken in a meeting and speech came slowly. This was her deliverance: " There is four corners on me bed — Mathoo, Marrk, Look, an' Jahn — God bliss th' bed that I lay on! " She probably meant to say something quite different and could n't.

Another incident of that stop-over was the feeding of three thousand children of the poor in an armory. The children of the rich had been invited to sit in the gallery and watch the poor children eat. It was a back-slapping festival where everybody felt that the angels should pause in their celestial activities and look our way. Mark Hanna and Myron Herrick were on the platform. The mayor and the ministers and almoners and the good and prominent were packed together. I was asked to address the children. From the gallery where the speakers were placed not a word could be heard by the children. Instead of attempting to yell down to the poor things while they were eating, I turned around and addressed Mark Hanna and the special privileged who crowded the platform. My speech had brevity and point. I pointed out that such a dinner was a demonstration of two things: first, a feeling of kindliness in the hearts of men; second, that behind this there was a social condition of which all men should be ashamed. I asked how the waifs were to be fed until next Christmas, and reminded them that such a gorge might salve our consciences but that children could n't live on it for a year. A few sentences, occupying less than a minute, but sufficient to wind up my connection with the institution. Their dignity was shocked, their complacency roughly handled, and " the president-maker " annoyed. That was the only thing of importance I was able to do in that city.

Only once have I been a candidate for a pastorate. The occasion was in a manufacturing town in Massachusetts. They had been sampling ministers for over a year, and as sermon-tasters and heresy-sniffers had become quite expert. I descended to every little artifice in the box of tricks to make an impression. I made it. I knew I had. By the time I got up to preach the sermon I had recovered. " When I came into your church this morning," I said, " I was a candidate for this pulpit. I am no longer in that humiliating position. If the Almighty will forgive me for trying to please you rather than serve Him, I swear never to do it again." I was called, and refused. Candidating is a mean form of self-advertising.

In New Haven I became director of religious work of the Y. M. C. A. This was a blanket commission. I conducted Sunday meetings in theatres, taught Bible classes, edited the weekly paper, and conducted meetings for boys. While on the Bowery I had made missionary addresses in Yale University and had been asked to connect myself with the student body as leader of missions. I could n't leave New York then, but I helped to reorganize Yale Hall, a students' mission whose main purpose, so I was told, was to give the members of the college Y. M. C. A. practice in public speaking.

In addition to all my other work I determined to take full advantage of the University, and entered as a student, taking a full course — not designed for a degree, but for intellectual equipment.

Besides all this I undertook the care of a suburban church. When it became evident that I could not carry on three men's work I relinquished part of the Y activity.

I accomplished something distinctive in the church. I made the Sunday evening service popular among non-churchgoing people. The methods were very simple. I gave stereopticon talks on great masterpieces in art. I threw on the screen responsive readings, prayers, and hymns. In the semi-darkness everybody was willing to sing, read, and take part. I arranged a committee. Over one hundred men, all non-churchgoers hitherto, made themselves responsible for the service. They raised all the money and did all their own advertising. Not a single notice of it ever got into the papers. The church was packed every Sunday evening. I organized a flower mission for the summer months. An old abandoned hotel was turned into what we called the Flower House. A few loads of sand dumped in the back yard made an extemporized seashore where children could play. We told stories, attempted some teaching, and gave entertainments.

The Flower House developed into a social settlement and is now housed in an adequate brick building and is functioning along settlement lines. All such things are good and helpful as far as they go; but they don't go very far. They touch the convulsing city problems with gloved hands.

In those days New Haven's public baths consisted of a tub in the basement of a public school. I photographed the tub and projected it upon a screen in the Grand Opera House for the consideration of the civic conscience. That was the beginning of an agitation that we pushed until the dream became a brick structure. When the city aldermen passed the law providing for the Bathhouse they handed the project over to the Board of Health. The Board members, having no need of a bathhouse, shelved the project. We waited two years, then began all over again. The aldermen passed another law and it became mandatory. This time the health authorities were shut out.

It 's rather curious how special activity in religious matters draws to itself violent opposition. The ministers, all fine men, all scholarly and dignified, looked askance at this unusual thing. Hardly a hundred yards from our church there was a small church of another denomination. The minister was a good man, but he lacked that extra drop of nervous fluid which was responsible for our activity. When he saw our crowds and had to content himself with dozens — a dozen was a crowd to him — he succumbed to temptation and said things about me which when noised abroad irritated some of my people.

" Never mind," I said, " I 'll get square with him."

One Sunday night I opened my service with these words: " I want you to do something for me to-night — something that will please me and help my soul. Over the way there is a little church. The minister is a splendid fellow — a far better man and a far better preacher than I am. His congregations are very small and they find it hard to make ends meet. This service will last just five minutes to-night. Then I want all who can put a dollar in the collection plate to follow me to his church and we will fill it and fill his collection plates. Those who can't put a dollar in, please go home."

We packed his little church. We filled his plates, and we warmed his heart; and before we left he warmed ours. The minister was greatly moved. He put his manuscript aside and spoke to us out of his heart. We were good friends after that.

Our church had a fiftieth anniversary. I made an attempt to square the church creed with modern thought. There was a definite statement concerning eternal punishment. I did not believe in it. Yet when I asked them to change it, they balked. When I asked them why they should force people joining the church to avow their belief in eternal punishment when they themselves did n't believe in it, they just hedged and said that the creed was good enough. Of course, where such ignorance prevails, facts are of no avail. I did manage to induce them to incorporate a by-law which said that children born and baptized in the church would enter into full fellowship when they came of age. This nullified two thirds of their creedal rodomontade; but they did n't know it.

I found it impossible to mix the people of the evening service with the steady attendants of the morning. We used to have an annual pew auction at which the highest bidder got the best pews and the poor were squeezed out of sight under the gallery. The auction was an institution sanctified by time and custom, and there was more opposition to a change than there had been to the attempt to introduce something of a forward-pass movement in the moribund document. I enrolled one hundred new members on one Sunday morning, but none of these would attend the auction. They were always " floaters," as the regulars called them.

After a few years in New Haven I went back to Ireland. My mother had then been dead some years. My father still lived. In the scenes of my childhood I seemed to be in another world. I was a stranger in the land of my birth. Everybody and everything seemed so small, so drab, so ancient.

The door of our old stone cabin was like the gate of a public park — open to all comers. Folks of our neighborhood walked in and out as people walk in and out of a department store. This was as I would have had it, up to a certain point. Then familiarity became something else. I wanted to be alone with my father and sister.

The chimney corner — my mother's place — was vacant. In all my life I have never felt an emptiness so keenly. She would have understood everything. My father and sister had not traveled far along the spiritual pathway of understanding. I went out to the potato field, to the spot from which the long pilgrimage started. I visited the stone pile where my childhood chum was breaking stones. He took the wire net from his eyes and looked at me. He expected me to look as I did when I left and talk in the old vernacular. He was disappointed in both. I was another person and he was the same. I expected some of the old fervor of companionship to return. There was no thrill, no common ground. A wide gulf separated us. It was of the mind.

I went to the churchyard and stood by the grave of the most saintly woman I have ever known — my mother. Everything I was and hoped to be I owed to her — to her love and faith. Perhaps she heard me as I said this at her grave. In the home nothing was changed. In the town all was as it had been except that a new generation carried on. The news of my return spread quickly. At night the house was so full we could hardly move. They would have remained all night if I had n't taken my coat off and announced that I was going to take everything else off and have a bath in my father's old tub. That cleared the house. We barred the door and were alone.

My father had become so deaf that they heard outside nearly everything said to him anyway. What puzzled them was where I was going to sleep. It puzzled my father also. He could n't imagine my climbing the little ladder and sliding in beneath the roof as I had done for so many years when a boy. I had provided for the emergency. I spread a lap robe on the mud floor beside the fire and went to sleep. Next day I took my father to a hillside outside Belfast in order to explain many things to him. In the mind of the poor in Ireland America spelled wealth. I had remained poor. There was a blank look in his eyes when I tried to explain that in the career I had cut out for myself the only wealth was of the mind and soul. If I had told him the whole truth he would have been utterly mystified.

While in Belfast I was invited to preach in a large church. My father was there. When he saw me in a Geneva gown delivering a sermon his eyes filled with tears and I knew he was thinking about my mother. This was her dream. When it was over and I was surrounded by friends he put his arms around me and said he wished they 'd " hap him up " beside her now, as he had nothing more to live for. By a curious coincidence, the mother of the girl I had met in the potato field sat beside my father. The girl had wedded a tragedy and was then in the United States.

I went to Glasgow to visit a brother and sister. I took my father with me. Every day we took long walks. We talked of things one talks of on the edge of the grave — life, death, immortality. When he said, in language more forceful than elegant, that " God would n't be so damned niggardly " as to keep him from my mother, there was neither profanity nor irreverence in the expression. I reminded him of his own words, " God 's a gintleman."

"Oh, aye, ye can bate on that," he said; "an' if He tuk oul' Withero in, He 'll not bar the dour on me."

At the station a group of curious bystanders stood on the platform watching the trembling old man clinging to me and dreading to let me go.

"We have just one minute more, Father."

"Aye, aye, wan minute — my God, jist wan minute; why could n't ye stay a wee while longer?"

"There are so many voices calling me over the sea."

He saw them watching us and impulsively dragged me toward a waiting room. He realized that the time was up. He stopped, grabbed me around the neck, and kissed me passionately over and over again. The whistle blew.

"All aboard!"

He clutched me and held me with the grip of a drowning man. I had to break loose, gently, lovingly, tears bedimming my own eyes. I caught a glimpse of him as the train moved out, despair and a picture of death on his face. His lips were trembling and he could n't see me any more. His eyes were too full of tears. A few months later they buried him beside my mother.

This European trip gave me my first opportunity to visit the art galleries of England, France, and Italy. From them I brought a rare collection of slides to use in my Sunday evening services and in theatre meetings. This love of the beautiful was not a mere love of pictures or statuary; it was an instinct which enabled me all through life to see beauty in everything.

A few weeks after my return to New Haven I found myself in a municipal conflict. A business firm which supplied the city with water wanted a new franchise. They had paid nothing for the old and wanted the new on the same terms. There was a widespread protest. A public hearing was called. The Labor organizations asked me to represent them. When I entered the aldermanic chamber, I found there leading members of my church. They were stockholders of the company.

" We tax a banana vender a few dollars a year for pushing his little cart through the city streets," I said. " Why should n't we tax a rich water company for the privilege of pushing their water pipes through them? The citizens only ask for common justice and decency."

The firm got their franchise on their own terms. They got it by bribery and corruption, and the corrupters were leading men in the church. This was the beginning of the end of my pastorate. It was hardly to be expected that men devoid of civic conscience and with no serious religious principles would tolerate any interference with their business methods. I laid myself open to criticism by accusing both the aldermen and the company of corruption. My friends said I had gone too far. I was beginning to think so myself when one night about midnight a man came to my house. He was the confidential book-keeper of the company. His conscience troubled him. He could n't sleep, so he said. They were calling me a liar, and he brought me the proof that the aldermen had been corrupted. Two canceled checks told the story. I had them photographed and sent copies to ministers and lawyers and aldermen. Before this I was just a " dangerous man." Now I was a " menace."

The district, just to show their appreciation of being fleeced, elected the arch-corrupter to the State Legislature.

It was a matter of great regret that the closing months of my pastorate should have been characterized by bitterness. Everything I said and did seemed to add fuel to the fire. Even my sense of humor was used against me. Most of the rich men of the church had made their money in oysters. One night at a bean supper, in a facetious mood, I happened to say: " You good, stalwart Puritans have eaten so many oysters that your bosoms heave and swell with the tide." That was characterized as " vulgar." A deaconess charged me with insulting the officers of my church. In my scrapbook I had a photograph of the officers and myself taken on the church steps between the Corinthian pillars. The lady had seen the scrapbook in my house, and reported that under the picture I had written " Pillars and Caterpillars." The fact that I was in the picture myself mitigated not in the least the severity of the censure. If some tower of Siloam had fallen on the wicked of New Haven, our church would have had no greater casualty list than any other. They made mountains out of molehills because I had attacked the processes and methods by which they became rich. The same thing would happen in any ordinary church. In the typical New England mind there is considerable genius for the material ordering of life as it is, but the translation of the ethics of Jesus into everyday affairs, leaves much to be desired.

I organized a People's Church and made myself a sort of pastor-at-large. I had thousands of friends among the poor and the working class. But it takes money to run a church, and the group around me were like the Pilgrim Fathers when they first landed. We had " plenty of nothing but Gospel." Many people thought we did n't have much of that either. Dr. T. T. Munger was one of them. I had a profound respect for Dr. Munger, and when he told me of his doubt I gathered out of Labor papers seventeen sermons preached to working people. I printed them in a small volume and called it *The Master and the Chisel*. I sent him a copy. He read it and changed his mind. " Their strong point," ran a sentence in his letter, " is *the humanity that runs through the pages* — along with *a sincere reverence*. I hope the book will have a wide circulation." Some criticisms are worth serious consideration. His was one of them.

The coal industry of the country was tied up. Coal soared in price. The poor were suffering. I conceived the idea of getting coal from Scotland. I told Philo S. Bennett, a tea merchant, who was a friend of mine, about it. He promised to cable the price of the first shipload. Before we were ready for that we had organized a coal company among the working people and had money to pay in advance. We sailed two shiploads into New Haven, sold coal at about one third of prevailing prices, and broke the siege. This was considered an unwarranted interference with business. Even city missionaries wrote to me protesting. Coal merchants were charitable people, they said, and often gave them coal for the poor. I never doubted that. But an occasional bucket of coal to a destitute family hardly justified them in adding one hundred per cent in price to the coal already stored in their yards.

Many of the people who attended the meetings in a theatre expected me to continue economic discussions and devote myself to Labor unions and political things in general. They were disappointed. I preached a gospel for the heart. I had a message for the soul. We found it very difficult to pay the expenses of the theatre out of the collections. In the making or managing of money I was always a mere child. I could starve, but I could n't ask anybody for money. The Unitarians invited us to use their church Sunday evenings. They charged us a nominal sum for the courtesy, but even so it took all we had.

My services to all sorts and conditions of people increased manifold and my outcome dwindled down to the edge of starvation. I could have moved, but I hated to give up. It seemed like running away from a fight. In the hope of learning something and earning a little for absolute necessities, I worked in a bookbindery. One day a man of some importance came in and, seeing me there, threatened to have taken away the trade of a large institution if the man I worked for did n't get rid of me. The man was willing to let the business go and hold me, but I would not endanger his business. I left. A few weeks later the man's horse kicked him to death. The bookbinder asked me to return. " No," I said; " the next attempt might produce Balaam's ass, and, while we need him, I don't want the responsibility of bringing him here."

I was chaplain of the Trolleymen's Union. One night I sat until four in the morning listening to a conference which called a strike. The secretary was an Irishman who spent his spare time and most of his wages in saloons. He was very eloquent, something of a bully, and as a worker utterly unreliable. When the company discharged him he sobered temporarily and demanded a strike to reinstate him. After arguing all night, they voted to strike. When the vote was taken I asked for the floor and to the amazement of the men proceeded to present the company's side of the question. When I began to give his record he became furious and hurled sizzling epithets at me. It was out of character and a bad blunder; but the provocation was great, and after all it was a help to his morale. I stopped in my speech long enough to tell him that if he preferred to debate with fists we might ask for a recess. He passed this up — and perhaps it was just as well for me that he did. He was never reinstated. After the meeting I told the executive committee that if they really ordered the strike I would resign and fight the Union — as a self-appointed representative of the public. They did not call the strike.

I was initiated into a union as an honorary member one night. There were six hundred men there. As I entered the door the men stood and shook the building with applause. In introducing me the chairman said: " This minister is doin' the Jesus business in the old way. He 's for the poor and the workers. That 's why we like him! " At the conclusion of a five-minute address the men arose again to cheer. I held my hands up and stopped them. " I don't want your cheers, men. I want you to give three cheers for the Master Craftsman of Galilee." There was a moment's pause. Then with a roar like thunder six hundred men cheered Jesus Christ.

I rented a small farm — a very small one — outside New Haven. In my straitened economic condition I imagined I could get a living by raising chickens. I had the popular idea that anybody could do it. The chicken department at Washington sent me a carload of literature on the subject. It was as bewildering as theology, but I got an idea out of it. Birth control had invaded the hen world and feathered motherhood was in the limbo of things outgrown. The new mother was an incubator. I visited a farm and saw the wooden mother silently demonstrate the world's advance. I was enthused. My dream enlarged. I saw yellow. My initial effort was to get a farm. I secured a copy of *Sprout's Abandoned Farms,* that classic of New England mythology. It fascinated me. Groves of Egeria, Pierian springs, and lots on Olympus were to be had for a song. I resigned my charge and without bell, book, or candle, benefit of clergy or farming experience, betook myself and family to one of these El Doradoes where deacons cease from troubling and the roosters do the rest.

By the time I had secured an incubator I had read, marked, and inwardly digested so much chicken literature that it seemed as if I had acquired a rooster consciousness. I visualized the yard full of little fluffy balls of life. My first experiment was with the one hundred Buff Orpington single-combed, marked, dated, and guaranteed eggs. I got the thermometer at the orthodox standard temperature. No heir to a throne ever came into the world with more care, solicitude, attention, or devotion. I watched that thermometer until my knees were as hard as a goat's!

While the new mother was doing her stuff I was speculating on sex possibilities, death rate, chills and fever, gapes, trench mouth, and other zymotic diseases to which the coming cloud of yellow life was susceptible. I had an elaborate balance sheet showing outlay and income. I had figured it down to a cent.

At the end of nature's allotted time, nothing happened. I waited a day. No signs, no sounds. This being born according to government literature did n't seem to be panning out. Two days. Nothing. At the beginning of the third day two chicks broke through. One of them smashed his legs over his brethren who were not. I waited. I am still waiting. The lone chick lived ten days. Then a rat ate it. This experiment cost me all the money I had — and most of my religion!

V

A CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST

THE life on the farm was an ordeal. I was bewildered at the volume of opposition. I was disappointed in the outlook of Labor unionism. Gompers had cast his spell over it and retarded Labor idealism for half a century. The Socialists were few and mostly German. Yet to me they had a programme for a new order. There was fire in their propaganda.

I joined the Socialist movement and was still more nonplussed by the opposition of the Unionists to my action. The red label was costly, but my mind had now something akin to the Gospel to fight and suffer for. The German Socialists opposed me. I prevailed over their whispering opposition and was elected State Secretary for Connecticut. I persuaded Jack London to come and deliver an address to Yale students. The mere announcement created a furor among the Yale authorities. The liberal minds prevailed, and although London was a poor speaker his address shook the student body as they were not used to being shaken. William Jennings Bryan came and delivered an address on " The Prince of Peace." Ernest Crosby and Bolton Hall both came and gave addresses. Philo S. Bennett, Mr. Bryan's friend, became so much interested that he was giving up his business in New York in order to give personal service. He intended to build us a church, but before he could do anything about it he was killed in an accident.

Church and farm were gradually vanishing, and hope was like a candle in the wind. In the autumn we were living on apples. One day I went up an apple tree to shake it for an Italian woman who seemed worse off than we were. A branch broke and I fell on a large boulder. I lay as one dead. My wife found me there. She hailed a passing grocer's boy and asked him to find a doctor. We were to move back into the city next day.

" Send for Jimmy Moohan," I said, when the hour for leaving arrived, " and he will cart me to the new place." All Yale men of the '90's remember old Jimmy. He was the expressman.

" Mother of God! " exclaimed Jimmy when he examined me. " Shure it 's an ambulance yer riverence shud haave."

" I want you, Jimmy. You are my ambulance. Pile me in! "

" Holy saints," he said, " th' oul' cyart 'll jolt yer guts out! "

" Let it jolt! "

Four workingmen walked beside the old wagon to keep it steady. I was in agony every minute. Thus as baggage in Jimmy's old cart I came back within the gates of the city — down and out.

The Central Trades Council sent a letter of sympathy and enclosed a check for fifty dollars. That was the only money I ever received from Labor Union sources. An Episcopal rector who is now a bishop sent a note of encouragement. Here is a passage from it: " I do not suppose I look at things as you do in all respects, but I should like to assure you of my great regard for you and of my implicit faith in your sincerity and goodness. I know that the world's great sorrow rests upon your heart and that many men who feel it not sit in judgment upon you."

One hour before the birth of a son — who is at this writing a senior in Yale — his mother said: " I think you must call the doctor." This simple sentence had a paralyzing effect upon me. There was no food in the house. A five-cent piece was all the money we had. It was after midnight. With the nickel to pay for the telephone call I went out into the street. It was a distance of half a mile to the centre. That half-mile was a page of the blackest despair in my history. First of all I cursed myself for the shyness which had prevented me from asking somebody — anybody — for help. Then I reflected on the causes of this condition. What had I done? Why was I hated? Why had God deserted me? If this condition was punishment, why could n't I bear it alone? My heart filled with hate. It was a nest of scorpions, spitting poison. My frame of mind was a condition precedent to crime and violence. I had not traveled this *via dolorosa* before. I fought without malice. I had no bitterness; envy was foreign to my nature. I had championed a cause — surely it was a just cause. I had relieved the distress of thousands. Now I stood alone in an abyss of anguish and there was no helping hand, no sympathizing heart.

I entered a small restaurant, used the phone, and took the nickel to the counter. The waiter, who was also the proprietor, recognized me — called me by name in a friendly way. He wondered why I looked so pale. His intuition was keen enough to discern all he needed to know. He refused to take the nickel. He urged me to have a cup of coffee. The look on his face, the tone of his voice, and his kindness made me look intently into his face. What was the secret of all this? He had acquired a habit of " knocking down " fares and I had persuaded him to find other work and give his soul a chance. Here he was, happy. I went back over that half-mile in a normal frame of mind. This hate was just a storm, a bit of inclement mental weather. Love of mankind was a fundamental thing in me. If even only a crust of the bread I had cast upon the waters returned to me, why should I be discouraged?

When Jack London was my guest in New Haven he urged me to try my hand at writing. He was quite insistent and made me promise to make a beginning and send my first efforts to him for suggestion and judgment. I wrote a story and sent it to California as he requested; but before it returned I had received a check from *Appleton's Magazine* for another story. This unexpected success took me to New York, where I became at once a resident of Grub Street.

Writing and lecturing brought a competence, but the old desire to stir men's minds by direct action kept forcing itself to the front. A quiet, sedentary life, with its increased comforts, independence, and freedom from restraint, did not satisfy the soul.

On the upper West Side of New York there is a Young Men's Christian Association which at that time was supposed to be the largest in the country. There were two men in the secretariat who were trying to extend the frontiers of a conservative institution. I undertook to address men in the large factories and shops in that region, under their auspices. In the noon hour I gathered crowds of men and interested them in things of the spirit. The board of directors of this Y branch represented more money than any board in Wall Street. All the great financial dynasties, new and old, were represented. One night I was asked to address the board and tell them something about the shop meetings. The chairman, president of a great trust company, introduced me. He closed his introductory remarks by expressing a hope that I would " say something good about the rich." For a moment the remark threw me off my balance. The implication was plain. I was presented as one who was in the habit of saying unkind or unjust things about them. I hardly knew how to interpret it, or what to say.

" I am not sure that I can satisfy the chairman's hope," I said, " but it occurs to me that I might present each of you with the eye of a needle."

They did n't quite get it at first, but when they did, a few moments later, they laughed. I think they thought a little too. I described the meetings. I went further — I described conditions. I went further still a few days later, when I advised fifteen hundred men in a shop to appoint a committee and negotiate with their employers for some alleviation of galling and unjust conditions.

That put an end to Y auspices. I knew it would. When those directors heard of it, I am sure they must have laughed again. They were all good men — some of them splendid fellows. I liked them personally when I met them, and they enjoyed the humor of my addresses when they heard them; but life is not a joke, and back-slapping is hardly an asset in righteousness.

It has always seemed to me that the Y. M. C. A. is a capitalistic institution. Its board of directors are selected on the basis of financial standing. They are conservative men to whom the *status quo* is sacrosanct. The Y secretary inevitably, therefore, becomes an echo, a spiritual futility; and in the uphill fight for either religious, economic, or social reform he is n't even a stretcher-bearer.

One day a news item concerning the fate of some foreign laborers in Southern labor camps attracted my attention. It was a brief notice, but behind the news I saw an American problem. Men had been lured by false promises to mines and camps, and, discovering on arrival conditions which were intolerable, they ran away. They were chased with bloodhounds and when caught were whipped. I determined to do something about it. I grew a beard, arrayed myself in blue flannel shirt and overalls, and went into the muscle market of New York. I was hired, signed a contract, and with a contingent of Russians, Swedes, Finns, and Hungarians was sent South. We were, of course, very roughly handled from the moment we left the New York docks until we reached the mines. We were Jim Crow'd everywhere, and there was n't a Negro in our whole crowd.

Our destination was the iron mines of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company in Alabama. The company paid our fare, and on arrival we had credit at the stores for mining outfit. The more we got, the tighter grip they had on us. The camp was sordid, unsanitary, and unfit for mules. There were Negroes there, but no color line. We were bundled together and blew our hot breath into each other's faces in the lifts and mine pockets. The screech of the drilling machines, the deafening roar of dynamite discharges, the rushing of unseen waters, and the loud, vulgar speech of the foremen made the place a veritable hell. Iron dust filled our eyes, ears, and lungs. It enwrapped our bodies like a tight filthy garment. All that was commonplace — all within the law.

I went on to a turpentine camp. The work was hard, but we were in the open.

I next found myself investigating convict labor in a huge stockade built around a coal mine. I could n't get a job there, but the warden permitted me to tell stories to the convicts in the evenings. He let me walk — lock-stepping — with black and white into the dining hall and eat grits and drink unsweetened coffee with them. After the evening meal the names of those who had been late or careless, or in whose coal rock had been found, were called out and they were flogged in front of the crowd. On the female side of the stockade I saw women flogged also. Nothing extraordinary in this stockade, brutal and inhuman as it was. It was within the law.

In a lumber camp in Florida I saw what I was looking for — peonage. There I got a job driving a team of horses. I was only there a week, but that was long enough for me to sense conditions and get the facts. I secured the names of poor peons who had been clawed by the bloodhounds and flogged by the bosses. I spent a month searching all over Florida for them; but I found them, photographed them, and got their stories. I secured snapshots of the bosses and the bloodhounds.

When I reached New York I put the material together and sent it to the President. Mr. Roosevelt went after the situation with his big stick. He put the Department of Justice on the trail of the new slavery and the new slavers — with the result that some of those lumbermen served time in a Federal prison, and peonage, for the time being at any rate, was stamped out. On this part of the Pilgrimage I wrote a series of articles for *Appleton's Magazine*.

VI

THE CHURCH FORUM

ONE night I met Dr. Percy Stickney Grant of the Church of the Ascension. He had been to some of the shop meetings, and later made inquiry as to who and what I was. " Irvine is a splendid fellow," one Y secretary told him, " but he is utterly undependable. He is likely to blurt the truth out at any minute, and that 's something — well, you know, in an institution like ours we have to be sure of a man."

Nevertheless he (Grant) asked me to join him at Ascension Church and conduct the Sunday evening service. I had no idea what the undependableness meant, but I asked Dr. Grant whether his vestry would endorse his call if they knew that I was a Socialist. He felt sure that they would. I sincerely doubted it, and I had no desire to go back into any church or any Y. M. C. A. I became intimately acquainted with Grant, and after holding out for six months accepted the call.

I was to begin the first Sunday in August. When I arrived at the church a note was handed to me. I was to preach at the chapel on Horatio Street. I was amazed. We had never talked of the chapel. I imagined all sorts of things. I went to the chapel. There were about a dozen people there. " Dorcas Room pensioners " was the thought in my mind as I looked them over. I read the service. When the time for the sermon arrived I said: " Good friends, it 's a very hot night, and out there in the park there are about ten thousand people. I am going out to give the sermon. Stay here, and I will return and pronounce the benediction."

Next morning I took breakfast with Dr. Grant. He opened the question by asking how many people I had. I told him there were about seven thousand within the sound of my voice! He thought I must be crazy.

" It does n't hold a hundred," he said.

" Oh, you mean the chapel! There were about a dozen poor old things there. I went out into the Square, got a bench, clapped my hands, sang a verse of a hymn, and when they surged around me like a sea I addressed them."

He never explained. I did not ask for an explanation. But I never went back to the chapel. There was no contract, no pledge asked or given. I was to have perfect freedom. The evening service was my work. I could make of it what I liked. That an openly avowed Socialist should be called as a colleague to the rector was a puzzle that gave grave concern to conservative people and news material for the newspapers. I did not flaunt my political programme in people's faces; I tried to interpret the news of the day and the life of my time from what I conceived to be the Christian point of view.

There was opposition from the start. All the cheeseparing experts made protest. The Fundamentalists were alarmed. One morning Grant left the breakfast table to answer the telephone. Covering the receiver with his hand, he said: "Here is a good brother" — a clergyman — "who wants to know if you were ever confirmed."

"Tell him that I was confirmed by the Lord Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore," I said.

"That ought to fix him!" was his reply as he repeated it into the phone.

The New York *Sun* kept up a continual barrage. It opened every Monday. The church was crowded at every service.

Bishop Potter was enthusiastic over our success and gave us his personal encouragement. One night I asked any who cared to do so to linger for half an hour to meet Dr. Grant and me in the chapel just off the robing room. We had prepared coffee and cake. The crowd filled to uncomfortableness all the space. The following Sunday night we repeated the social hour. One of the rich ladies of the church asked me who a tall, broad-shouldered man was. He was a Socialist soap-boxer.

"He looks like an orator," she said.

"He is."

"Won't you ask him to speak?"

"No, thank you. I don't want to explode dynamite."

She smiled and repeated the request to Dr. Grant.

"Why not?" asked Dr. Grant.

"Go ahead," I replied. "Turn him on, but if you don't turn him off in five minutes there will be a riot."

I called for order and introduced the man. His voice sounded like the softened reverberations of far-off thunder. He was brief, too.

"I have never been in a Christian church before," he began. "I am the son of a rabbi, and a revolutionist; but I take my hat off to this church. Here you are interpreting life as I think Jesus, who was also a Jew and a revolutionist, would do it."

That was the beginning of the Church Forum movement of the United States. There were forums before that, but not in the churches. For the first year I presided at them all. Then it was changed and we had set addresses and a questionnaire. Mr. August Belmont was the first to leave the church on my account. He had never seen me, save in the envenomed vituperations of the *Sun*. About three months later, as we were robing for the service, Dr. Grant said: —

"Mr. Belmont and about twenty of his Wall Street friends are in the church to-night. What is your topic?"

"The responsibilities of great wealth," was my reply.

After the service Mr. Belmont came into the robing room and introduced himself to me.

" You are a remarkable man," he said, " and so different to what I expected."

He came into the Forum and became intensely interested in the discussions. Some months later when I spent an afternoon with him he gave me what he looked upon as a great confidence. There was a movement to have Dr. Grant elected Bishop of New York when the next vacancy occurred. By that time Bishop Potter had passed away and his successor had almost ceased to function. Mr. Belmont named the men who were preparing the clerical mind for the elevation.

At the beginning of the second year Mr. Flagler suggested that it would be a good thing for him and some of his friends who were industrial leaders — Gary, Berwind, and Belmont, for instance — to meet as many men who were working-class leaders at a dinner. I arranged the meeting. We met in the Brevoort House and spent a pleasant evening together. Dr. Grant at that time was at the height of his power and popularity.

" You will bear me witness," he said to me one night, " that I have never made either suggestions or criticisms about your work."

" That is so."

" Now, Alexander, listen! I had a call from Cathedral authorities to-day, and they suggested that we give up our evening service and take charge of an evening service in the Cathedral."

" Amazing."

" Just as we do it in Ascension. Now there is significant talk of electing me bishop of the diocese; but I should much prefer to conduct a Cathedral service with you than be Bishop of New York — so I want you to be careful."

Destiny had framed for him a nobler career than either of these things; but her hand was hidden then. Up to the time I joined forces with Dr. Grant his life had been one of balanced relationships with the people and forces around him. He was one of the very few clergymen in New York who ever see the inside of the inner circle of the Four Hundred. Neither missions nor movements particularly interested him. Scholarly, balanced, generous, tolerant, and of tenderest sympathies, he fitted into the lives of those around him. He was an unwise eater, but he never touched liquor and he never smoked.

He feared or disliked publicity — and, as it was with Job, the thing he feared came upon him, later, in overwhelming measure. His vestrymen — except two — were men of the world, rich and powerful. The two exceptions were Theosophists. They were opposed to everything I did. They inaugurated an insidious campaign of opposition. They did it with subtlety, suavity, and Machiavellian cunning. Gary, Flagler, Berwind, and Belmont were all typical

American capitalists — men of immense power in the world of business and finance, but spiritual pygmies in the church.

" Why don't you ask Gary to abolish the ' twelve-hour day ' in the steel works? " I asked Grant.

He had never " interfered " in those matters. I had talked with Mr. Gary myself about permitting the steel workers to form a union, and with a snap of his square jaws he told me he would fight the idea as long as he had a dollar to fight with — and dollars were his weapons.

The time came when Grant did " interfere " in such matters, and he paid the price that all men pay who question the ethics of the god of Things As They Are. Dr. Grant's first great fight in Ascension Church was on the question of whether I should go or stay. I begged him to release me at once. He told me that most of the men on the vestry liked me personally, but that newspaper reports made me a Wall Street topic of violent discussion every Monday. Seven of the richest men offered to contribute five thousand a year each to a fund to establish me in a theatre or a hall. " Give them my best regards, Percy," I said; " tell them I am grateful to know that they think I have a message for the city. But my choice is limited to one of two things: I must have either a cathedral or a soap-box." I had always looked upon the Church of the Ascension as the Cathedral of New York — a house of God where, at least in the services I conducted, there was no distinction between races, classes, or creeds.

"I want you to tell me frankly," Dr. Grant said as his fight to hold me drew to an end: "if the tide goes against me, do you think I should resign and leave with you?"

"I think that would be a great mistake," I replied. "You are not labeled as I am, and the cause of religion and the interests of the city will suffer if you leave on any account save the account upon which I am leaving myself."

He did not agree with me that the Church was a smoke-screen for Capitalism. He entertained a hope that we were on the eve of great changes and that those changes would come from the top down. He was disillusioned later.

Two incidents, one showing how easy it is to be misunderstood and the other giving a side light on Dr. Grant's character, may be worth mentioning before I close this rapid sketch of my sojourn in Ascension Parish. The Forum inevitably became a sort of Cave of Adullam. Everybody who wanted to have a whack at anything came there to indulge himself. There was a middle-aged, gray-haired man who spoke every Sunday night (three minutes was the rule) about God. He thought that the God idea was the root of all the world's evils. The crowd called him

" the God-killer." One night he protested that I had shaved two seconds off his allotted time. I despise the wit or humor that leaves a sting. We should laugh with people — never at them.

" Well," I said, " you had killed Him."

The crowd roared with laughter. I could have wept with chagrin. It was cheap, very cheap, to raise a laugh at the man's expense. Next morning at breakfast Grant told me that my remark had hurt him. " Suppose we give him a whole evening," he said. " Fine! " I replied. So we found the man and asked him to be the principal speaker and descant on his favorite topic. He was overjoyed. In introducing him I made humble apology for my remarks. The man got up and had his whack. He talked for about five minutes and then he began to flounder. He had shot his bolt and was satisfied. I asked the crowd if they wanted to discuss it. They did n't. So we spent the rest of the time in discussing Birth Control and Economic Determinism.

" You talk about the soul! " yelled a young man one night. " Where is it? I know I have a stomach, but where can I locate the soul? " And so on for three minutes. This drew my fire. I became very much wrought up over it, and carried the crowd with me. When it was all over the young fellow laid his hand on my shoulder affectionately and said: " Did you think that I meant there was no soul? "

" Yes, that 's what you said."

" Oh, hell! " he replied. " I got up to say something else and could n't! "

A few days before my last Christmas at Ascension I read a brief report of an unusual court scene. A young man about to be sent to prison for life told a pitiful story and made a strange request. His mother had been a peasant girl, his father a Prussian aristocrat of some sort. He himself had been brought up in a religious institution, and at sixteen he was brought to Chicago and cast adrift. Of his sixteen years in the United States he had spent fifteen in prison.

" I 've never had a Christmas out of jail, Judge," he said, " and if you 'd kindly give me freedom just for this one Christmas Day, sir, I would n't care then what became of me."

In reply to the Judge's questions he rehearsed his crimes. Without work, money, or friends, he drifted like a stray dog until he met a gang of young thieves. They taught him how to solve his problems in their way. His first job of shop-breaking was his last. He got five years.

After his first term he went to New York. Work was hard to find. Saloons were the only places where he could talk to anybody. He hired a room over one and made it his rendezvous. There he could dip his hand into the free lunch bowl and play all the records on the old phonograph. One night, very late, when the saloon was closed and he had a morbid fit of nostalgia, he broke into the saloon and took the phonograph and six records to his room. He intended to take them back early in the morning before the saloon keeper arrived. But the saloon keeper lived on the floor below and recognized the wheeze of his machine. He called the police and charged him with burglary. Five years more. Ten years of cell life was an education in crime. When he came out his mind was made up to live by his wits. He deliberately planned a robbery, got away with a thousand in cash, was caught and went back for five more. The story moved the Judge. " If your story is true," the Judge said, " and somebody comes forward to give you a chance, I will consider giving you a parole."

I went to the Court and asked them to lend me the man for Christmas. It could n't be done. The district attorney doubted his story; a Court official told me that the man was a " crook " — he was quite sure. I begged for him nevertheless, but without success.

Probably half a million Christians read that feeble cry for " Christmas out of jail " and the Judge's ray of hope that accompanied it. Alas! They were too busy celebrating the birth of Christ. When the Court opened after Christmas two men appeared and offered help. One was a saloon keeper who needed a man to wash cuspidors and learn bartending. When the district attorney suggested to me the hopelessness of reforming thieves, I recalled a conversation with

August Belmont a few days before, in which he told me that Thomas F. Ryan had stolen from him the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, which had been built up by his (Belmont's) father.

" But," I said to Mr. Belmont, " I have been told half a dozen times that you bought up the New York Legislature in order to secure a subway franchise by which you are supposed to have pocketed thirty millions."

" Nonsense! " Mr. Belmont replied. " That was a matter of honest financing — not in the same class with the trickery of Ryan."

I told the district attorney that in reforming mere amateur crooks I had had success, but that with the professional class none at all.

" What do you want to do with this man? " the Judge asked me when the final moment came.

" Love him, Your Honor; be a father to him."

The Judge at that moment did n't know who I was. I was n't even asked my name. The order was given at once, and for the first time I looked into the face of the man who had been sentenced to me for life. He was very homely-looking; his clothes looked as if they had been thrown at him. I led him out of the Court.

I lived then in a small two-story house on 19th Street. I took him there and installed him as manager of my household. My material wealth consisted of some paintings and rare books.

" By the way, what is your name? " I asked as I was showing him my quarters.

" Joe Wiersky."

" Then you call me Father," I said, " and I will call you Joe."

When I had shown him over the place I explained the value of the few things I possessed.

" If the itch to steal comes over you, Joe," I said, " I want to show you what to steal first, so that you will not waste time or effort. I will write and sign a note to the effect that these things were mine and I gave them to you. That may save you trouble." He wept silently. " If you steal, you will be stealing from yourself." He handled whatever money I had, which was not much. The missionary society had given me one fourth of what I was earning in a publishing house, and at Ascension I received one fifth of what I had been earning as a writer. Only once in my life do I remember stipulating for a specific sum for any kind of work. Most people even in the work called spiritual demand adequate support. I never did.

I was foolish enough to tell Joe's story to an old curate in Ascension Church. I had a study in the Parish House, and one day when Joe went to get some books for me the sexton turned him out. When I asked the sexton what it meant he said the old curate had told him that Joe was a crook and must not be allowed in the church. Joe never entered a church after that.

On the floor above me dwelt a woman who was a publicist of national fame. Her fight for women's rights made her name a household word. In a moment of confidence I told her Joe's story. One day she lost an evening gown. Instead of telling me that she suspected Joe, she went to police headquarters and set the detective force on Joe's trail. They lost no time. My house was ransacked for the evening dress. In vain did I tell them that Joe had no need to steal such a thing — all I had was his. Every day they came and every day asked the same questions and turned out the same trunks, drawers, and closets. They made life miserable for poor Joe. I went to headquarters and explained. That helped nothing. They kept on. It was still like this when the end came to my career in the church. The nobility of Dr. Grant shone brighter and clearer as the end drew near. At the close of my last service he made a brief address.

"You have made a mistake," he said, addressing himself to the vestrymen, most of whom sat in the church. "I have listened to my friend's addresses for three years. He has never used a slovenly or unkind sentence in our pulpit. He lives closer to the Gospel pattern of a Christian than any man I have ever known. I shall miss him, but the outside world will gain by our loss."

Dr. Grant was a good deal of a mystery even to those who lived close to him. I never got into the man's inner consciousness; but I think I got nearer to it than any of his friends. I shall always think of him as the greatest churchman of his age — and a saint.

VII

BOOKS AND SOAP BOXES

WALTER HINES PAGE had spent several years in persuading John D. Rockefeller to write the story of his life. He told me he had spent a year in the search for a man whose life would be a contrast to the life of the financier. He thought he had found the man. Would I write a series of sketches? I was not keen to do so, but finally did, and with the money earned I made a first payment on a farm in Putnam County, four miles from Peekskill. Our two hundred acres of woodland and meadow with a trout stream running through them made a veritable paradise on earth. I imagined that nothing could entice me to give it up. I was glad for Joe Wiersky's sake, for the detective force were threatening him continually. They wanted him to be a stool pigeon. I was glad on my wife's account, for she had lost her mental balance and under the delusion that God had commanded her to do so she tried to drown our two youngest children. One day when I was full of hope that the quietness of the farm was what she needed she announced to me that God had again told her to get the children out of life because He wanted them with Himself. " So," she said, " I have some prussic acid, and I am going to put it in their tea so that they will feel no pain." She looked calm and sane as she said it.

" Well," I replied, as calmly as I could, " you will have to be careful, because if you give them too much or too little it won't work. I know exactly the amount to give them; give it to me."

She handed it over. The first violent fit she had ever had occurred that day when she found I was delaying the " commands " of God. Then followed long days and nights of heart-rending experiences. Deprived of one method, she tried others. She became obsessed with what she considered divine commands. We watched her night and day until we were all utterly worn out. I could not read. To write was impossible. When I recounted her mental history to the alienists, they told me she had been insane for over twenty years. The characteristics which I had considered complexes or idiosyncrasies were the early stages of dementia præcox. She will probably outlive me, but for twenty years her mind has been an utter blank. This kind of tragedy ends only in death.

Poor Joe, for whose freedom and comfort I had worked so hard, found the solitude unbearable. I found him in tears one day — and what pathos in his explanation! He had never seen much of folks. He loved the crowds, the lights, the shop windows, and the moving-picture shows. Here there was nothing but trees and birds and flowers! I had burned my bridges behind me. I could not go back to the city.

I let him go. How sad the end! The detectives soon found him and he had to fly. He got a job driving a horse and buggy for an old priest, only ten miles from our farm; but he was ashamed to let me know. One day he was crossing the railroad and a fast train snuffed him out. I can't say I was sorry. Manhood had been battered out of him before he came to me. He fawned like a pet dog. Now he was free and my mind was no longer disturbed about him.

In the summer time I invited anybody who cared to do so to camp on the farm. Those who came were mostly Socialists. I found myself with more guests than I could support. There were few real people among them. They quarreled among themselves. They were too lazy to chop wood with which to cook their own food. One man came to me in high dudgeon and told me that the housekeeper had insulted his wife. I found that the insult consisted in asking her to help wash up her own misplaced matter. I told the housekeeper to pack up and take two weeks' vacation. When the next mealtime arrived without any sign of a meal there was consternation.

" Dearly beloved," I said, " in the words of the immortal Lincoln, ' it is now root, hog, or die.' " So they rooted, but not for long. I then took to the soap-box and preached the Socialist gospel for six months, covering all the great towns and cities between the Atlantic and the Pacific. I added two hundred and fifty thousand subscribers to a small Socialist paper.

It was a great physical ordeal, but I had enthusiasm and strength.

I came back to the farm and enjoyed a summer there. I cleared off unsightly old shacks, put in a bathroom, and planted shrubs and flowers — once again determining never to leave it. But the Celtic temperament is a mercurial thing and plays strange pranks with whatever carries it around. A committee of workingmen came clear across the continent to persuade me to manage a political campaign. I revive these buried memories only for the purpose of showing my reaction to life as I found it, and as this campaign was extraordinarily bitter I omit names lest old hatreds should be revived with them. I worked and fought and planned, but I never hated. I could fight and smile, and the smile was n't a frozen facial expression, but a condition of the heart.

The state had been in the grip of a great railroad system for a generation. They had named governors, legislators, mayors, and judges. It was a railroad-governed state. The Republican Party made an effort to shake itself loose from the incubus. It elected a governor who defied the newspapers and the system. Socialists and Labor Unionism combined in an effort to wrest a large city out of the hands of those who used it for private ends. I was to plan and manage that campaign. I took three months to prepare the ground. I wrote the literature, made a nation-wide appeal for funds, and made most of the speeches. A campaign manager who takes a text from the Bible and extracts from it a plea for civic righteousness could not be taken seriously, nor could there be any political influence in a lecture on art. My political writings took the form of parables, psalms, and allegories. The old seasoned henchmen laughed at these things. But we carried the primaries with more votes than all other parties combined. Then they woke up. We had been the chief influence in giving women the ballot. I predicted that they would use it to beat us in the election, but urged everybody to vote for it on its own merit. In order to give an idea of what we were up against, let me quote the Republican governor's opinion of the editor of the leading Republican newspaper of the state: " He sits there in senile dementia, with gangrened heart and rotting brain, grimacing at every reform, chattering impotently at all things that are decent, frothing, fuming, violently gibbering, going down to his grave in snarling infamy. This man is the blot on the banner of the state; he is the bar sinister upon our escutcheon; depraved, corrupted, crooked, and putrescent."

That was Unionism's opinion also, but they expressed it in dynamite and blew his newspaper building to débris, killing several people. That was months before I arrived on the scene. Two men were arrested and were in jail. If I had believed that this outrage had any connection with the campaign, I never would have undertaken its management. If I had discovered such a connection at any time during the campaign, I would have dropped it instantly. Both the suspects were Catholics and members of a Catholic anti-Socialist society. Quite naturally, the shadow of the crime fell on us, and the newspapers held it there.

After the primary election we felt quite confident of winning the city. Our candidate felt so sure of it that he began to make a list of names of those to whom offices and commissions were to be given. It was somewhat disheartening to note that on the edge of power our idealists began to manifest evidences of the self-seeking which was the curse we were fighting. Idealism, passion for civic righteousness, and dreams of Utopia, began slowly to be toned down into practical politics — in a few weeks we should be the victors and the spoils would be ours.

The Labor Unions and the Socialists for the first time in American history were united and showing a solid front. Against us were all other political parties, all the churches, all the preachers, and all the prostitutes. It was a strange combination of forces. They had unlimited means. We were poverty-stricken. An emergency fund provided for underground methods. Shock troops were prepared. A very subtle scheme was arranged to trap our candidate for mayor. He fell for it. They found me a difficult proposition. I was n't a candidate for office —

never had been, never would be. I was poor, but had no desire for money. A lawyer who had been detailed to study me reported that there was only one hope of corrupting me. I had an affectionate nature, I was a red-blooded Celt, and I had no wife! They fine-combed the city until they found a beautiful woman who for a weekly check was willing to undertake my undoing. Of course it had to be done quickly. The trap set for our candidate for mayor was to be sprung in case of and after his election. Five different clairvoyants, spiritualists, or seers came at different times to warn me. These people were all strangers. Three of them predicted that I was to be shot, two of them that I was to be thrown into prison on a false charge to get rid of me until the election was over. I was advised to flee if I valued my life. The repetition of these suggestions did have some effect on my nerves. I was working twenty hours a day. All big questions came to me. All rumors, all fears and alarms, were thrust at me. Parades, mass meetings, canvasses, were organized and carried out — and at the height of it all came Salome, who was to deliver my soul on a platter!

She was Spanish, very beautiful, and played her part with the technique of an expert. At first she professed to be a convert to my views and wanted me to put her to work — in my office. One night I accompanied her to her suburban cottage. It was on the side of a hill, and when we came to the gate I said

"Good night." She took me by the arm and tried to hold me. I had work to do and resolutely refused to stay. She seemed very angry, and I found myself regretting my obduracy; but on another occasion when I was in a more pliable mood and would have acceded to such a request, she was moved by an address of mine and in tears confessed that she was playing a part. The plan was to involve me in scandal. Detectives were on hand. She was to provide the occasion and the newspapers would do the rest.

The campaign became bitter. Money flowed like water. The opposition became desperate. Only something akin to an earthquake would prevent us from winning the election — and an earthquake came. Four days before the election our opponents made a deal with the two dynamiters. If they would confess, they would escape the hangman's rope. If not, they were told, they would surely "swing." The men were guilty and confessed. The confession shocked the city. Labor people themselves by thousands voted against their own candidates and the Socialist-Labor ticket was overwhelmingly beaten. Our candidate for mayor fled and hid himself for the day.

"Are we beaten?" he asked as he turned up.

"I 'm not sure yet," I said, "but I hope so!"

After the election the Socialists and Unionists began to rend each other. Some of them sold themselves to the old party newspapers and poured out bile and vituperation. And those who befouled their own nests were the men who, if we had won, would have filled the city offices. I was well acquainted with the divorcement of creed and character in the churches. I was not prepared to see the lust for power so completely dominate the idealists. One more experience and I had finished forever with personal participation in party politics. I attended, not as a delegate, but as a member of the National Executive Committee, a National Socialist Convention. The convention was split up into " Reds " and " Yellows." This internal fight, accompanied as it was by a brutal arrogance and intolerance, was very disgusting. Some men with calloused hides enjoy the personal encounter; they feed their vanity on it. Out of this type evolves the boss. I was not built that way, and never attended another convention.

My sojourn in the West to manage the campaign cost me the farm. When I returned the interest on the mortgage was so far behind that I could n't make it up. I let the farm go and began rehabilitation in New York. I used to have many calls for addresses from preparatory schools and colleges. The Socialist label made people afraid of me and that source of influence and revenue was cut off. I was reduced to selling my rare books for bread and milk, which were our sole sustenance.

I wrote six short stories and sent them to one of the prominent magazines. They were returned. There was nothing unusual to me in having manuscripts returned, but a week after their return I met the first reader of the magazine and she told me why they were returned. Three readers had accepted them. The assistant editor was enthusiastic about them. But when they were laid on the desk of the editor-in-chief he asked if these stories were by " Irvine, the Socialist." He was told that they were. " Send them back," said he. I omit the rest of the sentence.

I moved to a small Connecticut coast town and began to write more stories. But the more I thought of the injustice of this editor the more deeply I resented it. I determined to play literary politics. That magazine was part of a book business. I deliberately planned to have a friend invite the book editor of the firm to spend a week-end in the country. I was there and told some of the stories. I am not adroit, neither is there a shred of shrewdness in my nature, but I played the part so well that this bookman asked me to submit enough of the stories to make a book. I told him that if he would only keep the manuscript a week I would let him look at it. He wired me that the firm were charmed with the manuscript. Would I call at my convenience and sign a contract?

A few months later I went into the office and received the first copy off the press. I asked for an introduction to the great mogul — the editor of the magazine. I was taken into his august presence and introduced. I laid the book in front of him and told him in language more terse than chaste that it contained the stories he had rejected because they were written by a Socialist, and that I was that " damned Socialist " and the firm that employed him were the publishers. While he was fuming I turned on my heel and left. Perhaps that was n't a nice thing to do, but I got more sheer joy out of it than I had experienced for many years.

My experience in churches and my brief sojourn into politics had not blunted the fine edge of my optimism. One of the newspapers characterized me as " a congenital optimist " — whatever that may be. In this quiet place in Connecticut it occurred to me to readjust myself to life as I found it. I had left the old landmarks, creeds, dogmas, and systems, but I had not definitely chosen a new pathway. I got a dozen large sheets of brown paper, nailed them to a wall, and with a soft pencil in my hand sat down in front of them.

I wanted to jot down some things in life that I was quite sure I believed. I passed in review the philosophical systems and sifted their meaning in the light of my experience. I recalled one after another of the many conceptions of God I had held. I scrutinized and analyzed the political cures for our social evils.

Confronted with such a vast mass of conflicting opinions, what could the simple, unsophisticated soul do? Where would this dove of inquiry find rest for her feet? Where could the weary soul find peace?

To the sophisticated I am afraid my findings will seem childish, but they became to me a working formula. I knew it would have to be done over again, but there was an imperative demand for a philosophy of life at the time. What were the forces which dominated and motivated my life at the moment? They were personal, social, and spiritual. The love bond between my mother and myself, the mystical touch with Jesus, and the joy I experienced in helping men. Names, systems, theories, or creeds did not interest me. I wanted the facts. I wanted to be able to say, *"This I know."*

Sunk in direst poverty all her life, my mother in her chimney corner was a minister of light. Her sayings came to me with fresh meaning: "There 's only one kind of poverty, and that 's to have no love in the heart." "God takes our hands and makes them His own to help folks." "A cup of sorrow is only half a cup when somebody shares it." These and scores of other sayings had woven themselves into the texture of my being. When I was a barefooted boy selling newspapers on the streets I had an experience which gave me a thrill every time I thought of it. It was a cold night. My bare feet were bleeding. The cold wind penetrated my scant apparel. I looked up into the heavens and said, "Jesus, if You will take my hand I shall not feel the cold." Even as I sat there with a pencil in my hand I felt the thrill come back to me.

That night I was warmed and illumined. It was the nearest approach to the meaning of God that I had ever had.

I determined to write a book on each of these sayings of my mother. I began at once and wrote *My Lady of the Chimney Corner,* the story of my mother. It went through only ten editions in this country, but in England and Holland after sixteen years it is still a best seller. I wrote the last pages of the second book, *The Carpenter and His Kingdom,* at intervals during the retreat of the Allied troops along the Somme, and the third, *A Soldier of Ideals,* is still to write.

I returned to New York and by a series of strange coincidences became interested in the manufacture and sale of a new metal. This metal was an amalgam of copper and aluminum. It had the texture of gold and the tensile strength of steel. I found the company in a small room on Times Square. I reorganized it, and became at first sales manager and later president of the company. When the war came, copper was practically unobtainable and the company went under. The work came as easy to me as anything I had ever done. I found other work. The directors went to Sweden with the formula. When the war was over they came back, but they had no disposition to recognize the old stock. I often wonder what would have become of me if they had. I owned fifty thousand dollars of it.

In the early stages of this adventure in the business world I was told of an artist who had been advised by a rich art collector to come to New York and exhibit his work. This collector had bought some of the man's work in Paris. He had painted a glowing picture of New York as an artist's El Dorado. The artist put implicit faith in the collector's word. He brought his family and his art and determined to stay. He was not unaware that no really great artist had ever made such a change with success. In Paris they said he was committing suicide. He worked in bronze — the plaque, the medal, the bas-relief. I was amazed at the man, and still more amazed at his work. He had a face that once seen could never be forgotten, a large head covered with thick jet-black hair, and wonderful eyes. My first impression was: Here is the Mirabeau that Chateaubriand and Carlyle carved with mallet and chisel out of the granite of the French Revolution. He was a thinker, a philosopher, and a poet.

He had been here a year when I met him, and he called it a year in Hell — though he had a profound belief in America. I must condense into a paragraph the high lights and shadows of that first year. An exhibition was arranged. The rich collector helped in the arrangement. While it was going on a prominent firm of silversmiths, jewelers, art dealers, and so forth, made a proposal. They would handle his output from their emporium. He saw a loss of independence in that, but he had spent all the money he had and saw no other hope. They presented a contract which shocked his artistic temperament. He was to work in their shop, make exits and entrances through the back door, be paid every three months — and they were to be sole agents.

By an accident he discovered that the man who had posed as a rich collector and bought his work in Paris was the vice-president of the company! When I found him he was on the edge of starvation — with a hundred thousand dollars' worth of art stored in the cellar of a little place at Coney Island. I planned a campaign: first an exhibition, then some publicity, a personal canvass of the sculptors of New York, personal calls on people of wealth; and, as his work adorned some of the great churches in Paris, I proposed to call on some Catholic clergymen. I had to ask for help. For myself, I could starve, but never whine or ask for help. For him I became bold. The political campaign in which neither life nor reputation was safe was a primrose path compared with a campaign to gain some recognition for an artist who had been Professor of Fine Arts in the University of Rome and a man of international reputation. It was depressing and discouraging.

Of the sculptors one man, one only, gave sympathy and aid. He bought a bronze plaque for fifty dollars. The richest sculptor in the city, who had received his education in Paris, told the man in my presence that it was quite as necessary to know how to market art as to create it. I took the art manager of New York's greatest department store down and showed him the treasures in the cellar. He knew nothing of art. He said he would consider giving him a chance if he worked in the art department so that the public could see him at work. Rich people in New York had never seen a beautiful bronze plaque in their lives. They looked dumbly, stupidly, at the beautiful things and shrugged their shoulders. We could hardly secure a notice in the " art columns " of the newspapers for the exhibition.

In the end I had to go into court and defend him in a suit for debt. He was an Italian who had spent his life in Paris. I interviewed Italian editors and wrote about the man and his work for their publications. There were a million Italians in New York, but among them few art lovers. He failed, and I failed, to get any recognition or help. All my efforts were unavailing. I made one final appeal to the rich man who had lured him to America. With him it was absolute control — for his business — or nothing. When I returned from the Armageddon in Europe he was dead. In the maw of materialism his heart was broken, and the body died soon after. His name was Giovanni Caretti.

Some day, I know, we shall be as well organized to preserve life as we are now to destroy it. The most difficult thing in life, for me at least, has been, and is, to maintain in the face of such ugly facts an inner calm and to see that life, despite all the appearances to the contrary, grows more pure, more kind, more illuminated.

VIII

ACTING AND TEACHING

For some years after I left the Church of the Ascension I had not appeared in a New York pulpit. The preachers were not afraid of me. They were afraid of their reactionary supporters. One night I was persuaded to preach in a downtown Episcopal church. The place was crowded. I talked for an hour on "What Life Means to Me." After the sermon I answered questions for another hour. In the audience sat a theatrical manager.

"That was a wonderful stunt," he said to me after the service. "You held that crowd spellbound for an hour *without scenery*. I saw the choir girls stick their chewing gum under their chairs and stare at you with rapt attention."

"What is the wonder in that?"

"To you, probably nothing; to me — I am a theatrical manager — a miracle. You have a wonderful voice. There are few as good in America, and none better. Have you ever thought of the stage?"

There were many answers to this question. I had been told a thousand times that I should make an actor. My voice and the element of drama in expression made what I had to say interesting. In the churches

I had always made the Scripture reading dramatic, compelling. This man asked whether I had any antipathy to the stage. None at all. It was like humanity — almost divine at its best and rotten at its worst. If I would consent to play a leading part he would have a play written for me. That did not appeal to me. If I ever acted it would be in a play of my own writing and carrying the same message that I essayed in the pulpit. He was dubious about that. I told him I would think it over and see him again. Ten days later I presented him with a one-act play. It was a dramatized sermon. He became enthusiastic about it and wanted to proceed with the selection of a cast. I hesitated. I was not quite prepared for such an absolute change in my life.

" How many people did you address in your church each Sunday? " he asked.

" About a thousand."

" And two thirds of them were pew-warmers, mopping it up each week? "

" Yes, perhaps that is not far from the truth."

" Why not get your highbrow religious stuff over to twenty-five or thirty thousand *different* people each week? "

That startled me. I saw the point. He assured me the act had a punch that would carry it over anywhere. There was no propaganda in the play. It represented a stormy period in the life of a minister. A bitterly waged strike is in full swing. The Labor leader and the mill owner are both church members. Both sides accuse the minister of sympathizing with the other. An act of heroism restores balance and reveals the manhood of the parson.

" Whatever you do or do not do," I said to the professionals at the first rehearsal, " don't try to make me an actor! "

" Thank God for that! " said one of them.

Every word and gesture of mine was as natural on the stage as it was in the pulpit. In the simplicity and naturalness of the piece lay whatever power it possessed. We played it all over New England. When the act was running smoothly we opened on Broadway. There were some curious reactions toward me in this new rôle. Theatrical journals were rather flippant about it, and some of my old friends in the churches were more than critical. The warm reception given the simple play by thirty thousand different people a week was ample compensation for all derogatory comments.

A few months behind the footlights gave me a strange new consciousness of belonging, for the time being, to another world. I found myself reading theatrical magazines and journals. I mingled daily with stage people in their clubs and boarding houses. They were clever people whose morals and ethics were as high as I had ever found them in the church. Vaudevillians saw in me a new asset. I was the only man who, being called before the curtain, could spend part of the two minutes allotted in speaking a strong word for the profession, and I was called upon for a speech after every performance.

My playlet was a dramatic appeal for fair play — a staged lesson in human kindness. In those days Will Rogers was twirling a lariat and spinning clever chatter. We were on the same bill together. As we stood in the wings one night awaiting our call, he said: " What 's the difference between preaching and acting? Were you pretending to amuse when you preached, and are you now pretending to preach when you amuse? "

I answered by asking: " Are you pretending to be wise when you 're fooling, or are you playing the fool when you 're wise? "

" All square at the eighteenth hole. Now let 's play off."

" Well, I admire your lariat. Yesterday my lariat was a pulpit; to-day it 's a stage; and to-morrow it may be a book or a soap-box."

I played in the piece for nearly a year. The acting was easy. The machinery behind it, — agents, tipping, booking, — and the inconvenience of playhouses in small cities, made the work irksome, difficult, and depressing. When agents began to fight over the money the play earned and to make me the victim of their quarrels, I tired of it. It was impossible for me to become wholly acclimated to the theatrical atmosphere. Stage people were congenial.

Conditions were bad. This was my swan song: —

THE VAUDEVILLE ARTIST'S LITANY

Remember not, O Lord, our offenses, nor hold against us the sins of our youth.

Spare us, good Lord.

From the Scribes and Pharisees who cast lots over our bookings, from the snap judgment of managers, and from time not based on merit,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From all places infested with rats, mice, and other pests; from unsavory food and unsanitary plumbing,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From underground holes, caves, dungeons, and boiler rooms, from whitewashed sheds and rotten floorings,

Good Lord, deliver us.

We vaudeville people do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God, that it may please Thee to help us preserve our souls from the dangers that beset because we are crowded together.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please Thee to preserve us from petty tyranny, blackmail, unfair discrimination, and from camping on the doormats of men whose meal tickets we are;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please Thee to enlighten all agents, hotel clerks, boarding-house keepers, stage managers, and leaders of orchestras;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

When I was in New Haven, I persuaded Bolton Hall to come and give a lecture to a group of laborers in the social settlement. He appeared in full evening dress. I wrote to him a few days later and asked him why he came in such a rig to address such people. Six months later I received an answer. He said such an outfit " always attracted the mob," and that to attract the mob he " would willingly wear a tin tiara."

Hall could lecture on any subject the human mind could conceive of — and wind up on Single Tax.

I 'm afraid I had a tincture of the same philosophy. I lectured before women's clubs, colleges, and preparatory schools; but no matter what the lecture was about, it was a medium to arouse the human soul to kindness, fair play, and understanding.

I had a good many calls to military schools. A sketch of my career, to cadets, never failed to arouse enthusiasm. Tactfully I made it known that I was an anti-militarist. I did not deem it expedient to reveal my mind fully on that point. If I had I should have said that if the Scriptures and the whole human family were for war I should still be against it.

I was invited to join the faculty of one of the largest military schools in the country. I was to teach literature and act as consulting psychologist. I was there nearly three years.

The teaching force was large. Everybody had a military title. The system of discipline was strict.

All the stupidities of West Point were copied and stressed. There was n't a real military man in the place; nor was there anything of the real life of real soldiers. There were pomp and gay uniforms, swashbuckling, circus horsemanship, sham battles, and sham leaders.

Newcomers to the school for the first six months ran around like scared rabbits, panned, paddled, and humiliated by every boy who had arrived ahead of them. The whole school seemed to be saluting something or somebody night and day; indoors, out of doors, in halls and bedrooms and mess rooms. Cigarette smoking was severely punished. A third offense meant dismissal. Those officers who snooped and gum-shoed to detect them were deservedly held in contempt by the students.

A four-year course was supposed to be equivalent to a high-school course. It may have been to a poor high school; certainly not to one of high standing. The headmaster must have been headmaster for half a century. He possessed neither the personality nor the intellectual equipment for such a position. The school is probably the best-advertised military school in the country. Rich men send their spoiled sons there for discipline. In my day less than five per cent went from it to college. Probably it was a good thing for a selfish scion of wealthy parents to get humiliated and biffed around, but that sort of thing can hardly be called education.

Heel-clicking, stiffened vertical columns, the saluting habit, and the extravagant, senseless, and inelegant use of the word " sir," lasted just as long as the boys were there, and no longer. The reaction to civil life was a slump. It was a community of boys ruled absolutely by fear, subjected to petty tyrannies, and in fierce competition for chevrons, ribbons, and medals, which involved them in constant and bitter jealousies. The war may have made changes there for the better. They may have now some real soldiers and an educated headmaster. But during my sojourn it was a false alarm. It is Don Quixote and Sancho Panza and Rosinante all over again.

I am well aware that there are some military schools where military bunk is subordinated to college preparation. I know of such a school at Manlius, New York. But in most cases they not only do not educate, but they give a boy an entirely false view of life.

My position was unique. I wore no uniform. The boys did not have to salute me. I untied their mental knots. I taught literature. I was the adviser and friend of all the boys — which meant that I was *persona non grata* to all the faculty.

Being a pacifist did not mean to me sitting apart and hooting like an owl in a tree. I was a human being, and nothing that was human was alien. The war came. We in the United States were not likely to be involved, yet over there were millions of men slaughtering each other in ignorance and hate. An inner voice called me to the conflict — not as a fighter, but as a friend. I knew the sham and humbug of European militarism. It was but the full flowering of all such tin-soldiery as I found around me. The masters had a quarrel, and millions of lives must be sacrificed to stupidity and pomp.

After seriously thinking it over, I was convinced that my place was with my tribe. I went into the woods and dedicated myself to service, saying nothing to anybody about my plans. Only men of influence or money could get over there. I had neither. I had my belief in God. If I were needed, I should be called; and, if called, the means to get there would be forthcoming. It would be difficult to find a man better fitted by experience to be helpful in such a cataclysm. I was as familiar with poverty, ignorance, hardship, and suffering as with my face in a glass. But I had sublimated these things. I had ideals. I had faith in the processes which gave me freedom. From a material poverty I never have been free; but I have been free from the fear of it, and, being content with little, I have made that little equal to riches.

Twenty months passed. About the first of May, 1916, I received a letter dated November 1, 1915. It was from a Quaker in York, England, a man I had never seen, never heard of. He had read my books, knew something of my history, and "the voice within" had told him to call me. The letter had been going the rounds of my London and New York publishers and various residences for six months. This, then, was the call. I cabled at once that I would come to England as soon as the school broke up in June.

I arrived in Liverpool on July 1, — the day of the catastrophe on the Somme, — and proceeded to London. Before I had been there many hours, I called on Clement K. Shorter, who had put his reputation in jeopardy by pronouncing my little book " an undying classic." The following day I was invited to luncheon on the terrace of the House of Commons. My host was Colonel Arthur Lynch, M.P., who had organized or commanded an Irish regiment against the British in the Boer War. He had been condemned to death for treason once, but here he was a member of Parliament. He had gathered together all the Irish members who had read my book. It was an interesting and a picturesque group. That day I met the dominant personalities of the British Parliament, among whom was T. P. O'Connor.

When I met the man who had called me, in York, and asked him what I was to do, he said he did n't know. His inner " leading " had been summed up in the call. I was new on the ground and must find my work. Very quickly I found out — and very definitely — what I was there for. In the two years of the war the United States had made billions out of the Allies. Wilson's " too proud to fight " remark was sneered at. We were said to be " capitalizing the blood and tears of Europe." There was a distinctly hostile feeling everywhere. "I have found my work," I said to my friend the Quaker. "I am the self-appointed representative of the American working class to the working class of the British Isles."

"If thee will speak for thy Maker," he replied, "thee will represent all classes."

IX

THE WAR: IN ENGLAND AND IN FRANCE

I BEGAN with the big factories and shops, going there at the noon hour. I made no apologies and offered no criticisms. I represented myself as a disinterested American who had deprived himself of many ordinary comforts in order to get money enough to come over and help. When I told them the story of my life they knew that I belonged to them. My job was, first of all, to give hope and courage; then to inform them that we were not all moneygrubbers; and boldly I capped every climax with the suggestion, well driven in, that America could n't possibly keep out of the war.

My talks to the men were reported to the police and to the general commanding the district. Knowing this would be done, I spoke not merely to the men in front of me, but to " the powers that be " behind them.

My speeches were considered valuable for industrial morale. Here was a foreigner doing what no one of the natives had attempted and few of them had the power to do. At the end of the first week I was invited to visit military camps, factories and churches, under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. I went to London to confer with Y leaders. Fearing an orthodoxy with which I had no sympathy, I proposed to give six addresses around London to soldiers and in them to incorporate the substance of my message. This was agreed to, with the result that I was sent to the great camps of the British Isles.

There were Germans in England carrying American passports, spying, and while America and Americans were held in general contempt, the British were not risking anything in international relations over spies. The enthusiasm I created everywhere for service — whether in camp or factory — mitigated not in the slightest degree the rules regarding aliens. I had to report myself every time I moved five miles, or changed my billet, or took a train. I was arrested several times, and was constantly under suspicion. I never complained. I just explained and carried on.

If the English used whips in their surveillance, the Scotch used scorpions. In Edinburgh they forced me to take out an "identity book." To catch somebody, as they had caught me, without one seemed to the super-detectives of the North a great joy. "How many miles from London to Edinburgh?" I asked the man who was giving me the third degree with extras. "Good Heavens," I exclaimed, when he told me, "I 'll have to walk back and report every five miles!"

"Oh, no," he said dryly. "Noo that ye 're here we 'll mak that up to ye." And they did.

The hardest thing I ever tried to do was to impregnate a mass of Scotch soldiers with enthusiasm. I could get English, Welsh, or Irish going in five or ten minutes. It took half an hour to get a ripple on the surface of the Scotch mind. I have never been able to make up my mind whether they were more stupid than others, or just more discriminating.

By a strange coincidence, my first assignment in Ireland was to address a regiment of cavalry in Antrim, the place of my birth. None of the military authorities who arranged the programme knew anything about where I was born. A room in a hotel had been assigned to me. I had an hour of leisure before the address. I went to the home of my sister, and arranged for an extra supply of fuel for her fire. When the camp meeting was over I went back there, and in front of the fire we sat all night telling stories.

My activities were not wholly confined to the camps. I spoke in the churches and before societies. Whereever I went, whatever I did, I took care not to bother much with the theories of life or destiny held by the majority of the people. I had a definite purpose and held myself to it.

After covering the camps of the British Isles, I made my headquarters in London. I became a member of the Authors' Club. I had a little flat in London. A niece of mine was caring for my youngest children. She wanted to serve in France. I arranged for her to go, and placed the children in schools. My good friends, Lord and Lady Aberdeen, cared for my little girl in Scotland. The boy went to an English boys' school. Before our little home was broken up I went through a crisis which was like a smelting of the soul. A lie was staged. I was the victim of it. I could have shattered the thing to fragments by evidence. I saw that the choice was one of two things — prove a woman a liar and go on with my work, or refuse to pit my character and force against a woman and ruin my mission in Europe. I chose the latter. There was a break. I stood alone with hardly a ray of hope of doing the work in a great world crisis that I felt called to do. Nothing in the entire gamut of human relations tests the human soul so severely as letting one's friends believe a lie and watch them slink out of sight. I had always believed that one of the splendid characteristics of the English people was their devotion to fair play. This crisis put a severe dent in that belief. I was the victim of an *ex parte* judgment based on spite and frustrated lasciviousness.

What could I do? I could believe in God and stand alone. In the interim I spoke at conferences, addressed churches. I preached several times in St. Martin's in the Fields. Dick Sheppard was then the vicar, and the most beloved minister in London. One day I took my niece and the children to Hyde Park. We were down to the last few shillings. The rent was due.

" What *are* you going to do? " my niece asked.

" Listen, little girl," I said. " If there be no God, it matters little what we do. If God *is,* He will put me in the very centre of the cataclysm — where I belong."

We were sitting on a bench facing Park Lane. It occurred to me that over there a friend of mine had an office. I had an impulse to call on him.

" I am going over there to call on an old friend," I said. " Don't move from here. Perhaps God is there. Anyway, if when I come back into the Park you see me throw my hat in the air, it will be a sign to you that we have hitched our old wagon to a star! "

When I came back into the Park I threw my hat into the air several times. The children thought I was fooling, but I was in a truly jubilant mood. I had been asked to write a Life of Christ, and while doing it I was to receive a subsidy sufficient to keep us in comfort. I had been asked to do this shortly after I landed in England, but that was n't what I had come to do.

I moved my small tribe up the Thames to Cookham Dean, near Marlow, where I became a neighbor of my friend Jerome K. Jerome. An old-fashioned house, a beautiful yard, and the Thames flowing lazily by made an ideal change. The work was something I had wanted to do for years, for I knew of no Life of Christ that a workingman could read with ease and profit; and yet all the time I was doing it I felt in exile. My restless soul was not at home in ease and comfort. The world seemed full of hate. I wanted to do something about it.

America entered the war. I wrote a score of letters offering my services, but not a word came back in reply. I worked and waited. The entrance of the United States into the war had some curious reactions in the English mind. Military leaders knew what it meant; there was no division of opinion among them. To them it spelled victory for the Allies. Some old chair-warmers in the clubs were sorry. They were the same people who said the war would be over by Christmas 1914. In the Authors' Club I was a good listener. I knew few of the members, but as I sat and listened I was amazed at the ignorance of men on things American. I saw Woodrow Wilson sitting beside the King as they drove to the Palace. Wilson took London by storm, but in the Club that night there was unanimous condemnation of his bad taste in forcing the Royal Family to entertain Mrs. Wilson.

Americans in London began to lift up their heads; they became important. I was told by leading members of Parliament that Wilson was the only statesman in the world speaking in terms of world needs, and that opinion prevailed until Versailles.

A catastrophe on the western front brought me out of my retirement with a suddenness that took my breath away. The long bread lines, sugar queues, meat tickets, hunger, and the Zeppelin raids were all making inroads into the morale of the civil population. The trouble seeped through in letters to the soldiers and affected the fighting men to such an extent that military leaders feared a debacle on the front line. A general was sent from Haig's headquarters to London with an S. O. S. Something had to be done, and done at once. The Cabinet met. Lord Rhondda was Food Commissioner, and Lloyd George put it up to him. He could n't sink the German U-boats. He could n't call down manna from Heaven. A wire summoned me to the Food Commissioner's office.

"A serious condition has arisen on the western front," Lord Rhondda said to me. "The morale is in danger of breaking, owing to our shortness of food at home. We have decided to send to France six of the best speakers in England, and you have been recommended to me to head the list. Will you go?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"The British Government will be under great obligations to you — I understand you are an American."

I had an interview with a general from the staff of the Field Marshal, and when I came out into the murky streets of London the first thought that came to my mind was my dear old father's "God 's a gintleman!"

The men selected were orators and men of known influence. None of them were preachers, and only one of them a politician. The usual custom was to hand all such delegations and commissions over to the Y. M. C. A. for transportation and entertainment. In this case the Y could n't see how they could take under their wing Horatio Bottomley, for instance, who was one of the six and a man of tremendous influence with soldiers. I expected to go under the direction of Army Headquarters. The Y wired for me. Would I go to France in the Food Controller's commission *under their auspices ?* Certainly. Would I wear their uniform and continue with them when finished with the work in hand? Yes, of course! So it happened that of the six men sent out *in extremis* I was the only one whom the Y would sponsor.

In this new sphere of work I seemed to see the finger of destiny. There were few experiences common or uncommon to these millions of men that I had not gone through before them. I had been in the coal mines; I had been on battlefields; I had hungered and struggled as many of them had done, and out of the abyss I had emerged with some degree of ability to serve my fellows. I had a voice. I knew crowd psychology. I knew what I could do, but I wondered to what extent red tape would hinder me from doing it. It would have been a waste of breath to tell anybody just what was in my mind, but I was gifted with sufficient wisdom to get a phrase at first hand from the highest authority to back up my point of view. Circumstances were fortuitous. An interview with the Prime Minister gave me the chance. I went to him at his invitation. He had my record and referred to it.

" You are a Celt, are you not? "

" Yes."

" That accounts for your power of speech."

" It accounts for the element of fire, probably, but that is not all."

He pointed out the difference between talking to men in home camps and to men under the strain of the conflict and burdened with anxiety for their families at home. I knew that, but had no doubts in my mind as to the service I could render. There were fears far deeper in the souls of fighting men than the fear of suffering. I spoke of the fear of death, and told him I could take it out of a million men's minds if I had permission to put into those same minds an abhorrence of war. All the Allied statesmen were saying that this was a " war to end war." I wanted to draw from Mr. Lloyd George something to that effect, so that I could give it as a direct quotation. I had permission so to quote him. I could n't overstress abhorrence of war as far as he was concerned, and I considered all others of minor concern. Two days later I was mind-sweeping in Ypres.

I believed then, and I have not changed my opinion, that when I was talking to Mr. Lloyd George I was talking to the most brilliant statesman in Europe. Only a Celt can understand the Celtic temperament. I could not have been so outspoken to anybody else.

To say what I did was a great relief to me, and his reaction gave me great courage. With the Y secretaries and the military leaders I should have to feel my way until they knew me.

My programme, kept secret, was to inoculate with good cheer every human soul I met, no matter who he was or what he was. When I was dealing with soldiers in the mass, I would make them laugh for four fifths of the address and in the last fifth pour in suggestions which would create a super mental hygiene and induce the will to win, and in a final sentence or two I would describe war.

The town major escorted me through the ruins to a Ford car which awaited me. The driver was a deaf man who had been detailed to take me to various centres. Before we had gone half a kilometre the Germans began to shell the road. A mile away we could see the shells explode. I advised him to stop and wait awhile.

" Don't be afraid," he yelled at me. " We will take our chance! "

" I 'm not afraid," I yelled back, " but I 'd hate like thunder to have a Ford tire punctured so late at night."

So on we went. Over toward Passchendaele the British guns were active. Fitful flashes of fire lit up the dark billowy clouds. Beyond Menin Gate the antiaircraft guns were barking and I knew there was a renewal of activity in the air. Somewhere I heard the song of a bird. It was a nightingale, and I remembered that the town major had said he heard it every night.

I was billeted in a house which had neither window glass nor doors. It was bitterly cold. I buttoned my trench coat tightly up about my throat, wound the blankets around me, hung my helmet on the floor, and lay down — to sleep if possible.

The most attractive thing in Popperinghe to me was the old stove in the Y dining room. I cultivated the acquaintance of the dining-room orderly with the object of getting a warming acquaintance with the stove. I was permitted to take the long stovepipe down and clean it; also to make myself useful at the woodpile. I used to get up at dawn, light the fire, and do some writing. One morning a famous Oxford professor came in. I had heard of him the night before. We were all duly warned that he was a great man. I knew him by his Oxford brogue. I heard a man say once that " an Oxford man was like an egg that had been laid twice — and each time successfully "; but that did n't deter me from an attempt to cheer up even the professor. Mistaking my feeble attempt to welcome him for the subserviency of a flunky, he rather blunted the keen edge of my good intentions. He had come out to talk to the soldiers about international law — something as interesting to them as *The Secret Doctrine* by Madame Blavatsky would have been. I gave him the newspaper of the latest date. He wanted his breakfast, but I could only get him a cup of coffee.

" What doh yoh doh heah? " he asked.

" I 'm a batman, sir." I was, too — the batman of Tommy Atkins. The orderly came in. I was his batman also. The great man finished his coffee and went out — probably to lean up against a barrage or see where the war was.

" Oo is 'e? " asked the orderly.

" Soft pedal! " I said. " He 's a great man. I gave him coffee to quiet his war-worn nerves."

" Did the blighter hask for hit? "

" No, the blighter *hordered* it! "

" Let them ask questions," said Lord Rhondda to me as I left him. " If you can't answer them, I will. Just wire me."

That sounded all right in Whitehall, but in Ypres, when I invited questions, the first one hurled at me was: —

" Is n't Lord Rhondda a b——y profiteer? "

I dodged that, but I could n't dodge them all, and few of them bore any relation to my lecture. A Scotchman, in Gothic speech, got over some Socialist propaganda with a little birdlime at the tail end for me.

" Of course I am interested in your speech," I said, " but on this occasion it must be assumed that I don't know the difference between Socialism and rheumatism! "

" When will the war end? "

" In the United States," I answered, " we are making preparations for five years — " A terrific howl broke the sentence, and no wonder. These men were all war-weary and nerve-strained. The howl was followed by loud laughter.

" One moment! " I said, in a tone that commanded attention. " You are a little ahead of the game. You did not let me finish the sentence. Let me repeat and complete it. We are making preparations for five years, but our hope is that in coöperation with the Allies we shall use up those preparations in twelve months! Now listen! I hope there are no Germans here. This is a family conference on the cupboard question, and let us be quite frank with each other. Is n't it true that in the judgment of many here present the Germans were to be beaten, the war was to be ended, and you were to have eaten your Christmas dinner in peace in England in 1914? "

They answered by cheers. It was a direct hit and registered. That was the last time I asked for questions. The British and American governments furnished me with startling statistics about ships and food and men. I did n't use them; I knew a better way. I was furnished with lies about the Germans. I set them aside. It took only a week to feel my way to a definite psychological programme.

X

MIND-SWEEPING AT THE FRONT

General Hunter–Weston, Corps Commander of the Eighth Army Corps, heard of the man who was creating a new morale. He sent for me and before his generals and staff officers asked me to demonstrate my morale-raising methods. Up to that moment I had not fully tried my own programme. I tried it out on the generals. I began by explaining the psychology of suggestion, and I made some demonstrations. I asked them to imagine themselves for a little while common soldiers. Then I told funny stories of my own life as a raw recruit. They laughed; they could n't very well help it. I kept up the laughter for half an hour, and then in less than five minutes' time I painted a word picture of the final stage of the war — as a long sea avenue of British and American warships from New York to Havre, and down the avenue a continual stream of ships carrying food, troops, and war supplies. Ten million fighting men, the youth of the New World. Unlimited money. Allies getting stronger every day; the Germans getting weaker. A sudden collapse; then peace and a reconstructed world, with war, the scourge of the human race and a denial of God, abolished forever! These words seem cold now as I write them, but they were hot words then and moved those men's souls just as they moved the souls of over a million men on the French battlefields before I finished.

I had established a precedent. The Corps Commander held me in the Ypres salient. Circumstances occasionally demanded a change in the programme. For instance, when meat was scarce in England and I knew both officers and men were anxious about their families, I used to tell of my own childhood and youth when the best I ever had was cows' feet, and that only once a week. I explained the psychological effects of the energy I spent in speaking five to seven hours a day. I had abnormal physical strength for a man then over fifty-five, and attributed it to the absence of meat in my youth!

General Franks commanded the 50th Division in the Ypres salient. He was one of the few men to whom I could talk freely about what I wanted to do and how I wanted to do it. He had observed the effects upon his own men.

" By God! " said one of his staff. " You could make our men fight for the Boche! "

A few days before the great German offensive on the Somme, I was ordered to Ham. Half a million men were camped there. The nearest point to the German lines was Clastres, identified by a sign which read, " This used to be Clastres." The British soldiers had made a garden of the place. Flowers and vegetables were beginning to peep above the ground; vines had been trained, and rustic trelliswork, rocks, and scrap iron had been piled together and in a few weeks would be covered with Virginia creepers and climbing roses. The seeds and plants had come from England. Care and labor bestowed on these little plots gave a look of permanence to the place. The Somme trickled lazily through some of the gardens, and the stumps of shell-shocked trees lined the banks. Before I addressed the men I was asked to address one hundred officers. As I went out in front of them in a hut and they had a look at me as a Y man, they almost laughed. I knew they were disappointed.

" I thoroughly appreciate the feeling I see spread out on your faces, gentlemen," I began, " but in self-defense I may say that I neither started this war nor invented the uniform I wear, and I am convinced that the man or men responsible for either or both should be shot at dawn without the formality of a court-martial." I was facetious to prepare the ground; then I exerted myself and won them over completely.

" Look here," said a battalion commander, " we had no idea of the fire and humor hidden behind that damned khaki outfit of yours, but now we know you, do stay a few days. Our men will go through hell after a talk like that! "

I arranged to give them some extra time, and made arrangements to visit them three days later, but when the time came Clastres was a shell-pitted mudhole and two thirds of those officers were underground.

The Y headquarters in Ham was a ramshackle building which it was impossible to keep warm. There gathered around the dining-room table three times a day a strange aggregation of camp followers, yeast stirrers, morale-raisers, and others. I noticed among them a very small pale man who seemed to be suffering. I asked one of the assistants who he was. " He is Sir Harry Johnston," he said, " and I wish to God he 'd go home. He 's a good deal of a nuisance."

" Sir Harry Johnston? "

" Yes."

" My dear man, he may be feeble now, but do you know that he added a million square miles to the British Empire? That he is a scientist, an author, an explorer, and a great governor of colonies? "

No, he did n't know, and he did n't care. I found out that Sir Harry had become a nuisance by asking for wood for the stove in his room and sometimes for a little hot water. That night I went scrounging for firewood. Next morning very early I lit the fire in his room, greased his top-boots, got him shaving water and a mug of tea. I did it all stealthily, noiselessly. When all was ready I pulled the front of my steel helmet down over my brow and awoke him.

" What — what! " he said as he looked around.

" Your shaving water is on the stove, sir; your boots are greased; and I thought you would like a mug of hot tea."

"Who are you? I must be dreaming."

"Oh, I 'm just a batman at large, sir. I have to move around a good deal, but as long as I am here I shall attend to your fire and make you comfortable." And I walked quickly out of the place.

The night before the great debacle I was scheduled to address officers in the old Ham Opera House. I had talked to ten thousand men during the day and I was far spent physically, but the sight of two thousand officers of all ranks inspired and strengthened me. Somehow in the midst of that address coming events cast their shadow on my soul and I talked as I had never talked before. Thoughts and words new and strange and perhaps somewhat weird came to me, and instead of the ordinary mixture of humor and pathos and vision it was all vision, and spiritual in the highest degree. I can recall only the closing words, because a colonel asked me later to write them in a diary for him: —

"We are not puppets in an Olympian show, playing for the amusement of the gods. We are not victims of a blind force — consciously or unconsciously. We are hammering out on a mighty anvil the birth certificate of a new world. I salute you, sons of Vulcan, sons of God, as you go out to the forge!

"Scoop down that beetling mountain,
And raze yon jutting cape;
A world is on your anvil —
Now smite it into shape.

"*March* 21, 1918"

Next morning the dance of death began. All lecturers, amusers, and instructors were ordered home — to England. I was the only exception. The Germans opened fire on a fifty-mile front. The earth shook and trembled. Many camp followers seemed to go crazy. There was a rumor that we were surrounded, hemmed in. I went out, invented a counter-rumor, came back laughing and spread it. I laughed the fear out of every man's soul around me except one — a Presbyterian minister, who had an idea that God was laughing at us.

"What makes you think so?"

"The Bible says He shall mock at our calamities and laugh when our fear cometh."

"Don't worry, brother," I said. "God may smile at our stupidity, — I don't see how He could help it, — but He is too much of a gentleman to laugh at calamity!"

Lorries came for the others to take them to the coast, and I was driven in an army car to the 50th Division of Harboniers. The road ran along just behind the fight — Ham to Péronne, thence via Albert to my destination. The sun came out, the skies cleared. A mile from Ham we passed a Tommy who was driving a huge motor tractor and calmly smoking a cigarette. I wondered how long he would be farming. The crops of corn and other cereals had come up through carefully cultivated fields, and signs in French and English warned all and sundry to keep off. The farms looked not unlike England in springtime. We were nearly driven into the ditch by another Tommy who with a horse and truck was moving a family. A woman and five children were on top of their furniture. They were laughing. A goat was tied to the axle. There was a parrot, a cat, and two pigs. Tommy was having the time of his life. I hoped they would escape the barrage which came nearer and fiercer. Dispatch riders flew past as if on the wings of the wind. Swallows chattered on the telegraph wires, and magpies, unconcerned, proceeded with their spring home-making. For twenty miles along the route the British cavalry stood in readiness — the men at the horses' heads, bridles in hand. Horses pawed the ground restlessly, but there was no noise — not a sound; not a word of command broke the stillness. A sense of power seemed to charge the very air. The Artillery Reserve was in the sunken roads; overhead British planes kept off the eyes of the enemy.

The 50th Division was entraining for the front when I arrived. I returned to Ham. On the way we met miles and miles of ambulances carrying back the broken bodies that were the morning's toll of German gunnery. Chaos reigned at Ham. The Germans could have reduced it to ashes, but they needed it as a base, probably, and spared it. But the British could not hold it. In one single day they had been pushed back thirty kilometres.

I selected my own work and at Ham railroad station attended all night to the " walking wounded " — that is, men whose wounds permitted them to walk back from the fight and leave the casualty clearing stations for the more seriously wounded. They straggled in all through the night, fingers gone, heads, arms, and bodies swathed — temporary dressings they had had near the line. We gave them refreshments and cigarettes, piled them into lorries, twenty at a time, and sent them back. The station room was lighted by an oil lamp. The men, smeared with blood, sat against the wall. Few of them talked, none of them complained about themselves; but wounded gunners were angry because German planes had come down close and shot British gunners at their guns. There were no British airmen to protect them. The night was a *nightmare.* Stolid, silent, broken, and bloody, the procession continued until dawn.

Next day I helped to entrain the civilian population. The town was to be totally evacuated. The last person to be entrained was an old woman who limped along with a few worldly possessions in a bed sheet. I picked her up in my arms and carried her into a compartment. Then I gathered her bundle and put it by her side. She put both her long lean arms around my neck and, kissing me on both cheeks, sighed, " Ah, M'sieur Tommy! "

When night came the British were in retreat in such a way that the general in command became the subject of a court of inquiry. Our first stopping place was Amiens. In the backward scramble I was n't thinking of who was to blame or who was n't. Death, disaster, and chaos were all around us. Men around me whined as little in defeat as they boasted in victory. They took it all calmly, as part of the day's work.

Amiens was crowded beyond capacity. Long trains filled with soldiers stood on the tracks in the station; civilians packed all the cellars. I was busy among them. Just a cheerful word, *" Tout va bien,"* seemed to lift their hearts. I paid special attention to our own camp followers. I told funny stories and invented stories of wonderful reserves. It seemed to me a miracle that not a single bomb dropped on the station — they dropped everywhere else, apparently, for next morning the devastation looked frightful. Every building around the station was demolished. The station stood intact.

One phase of the aftermath was the thousands of men who became separated from their regiments and battalions. Hearing that there were thousands of such men at a railhead called Abancourt, I asked to be sent there. The Y man did n't know me, and said the men did n't want meetings. I had to ignore him, but I tried to do it kindly and diplomatically. I had signs painted and hung around announcing that at a certain hour there would be a one-man show. Two thousand turned up. I gave my programme, lengthening the humor, shortening the serious appeal. At the second meeting I had seven thousand. I toned up the men's morale and prepared their minds for the reunion and work just ahead of them.

In that region there were about twenty thousand men. Coming back from the camps one night, I was groping my way along the railway tracks when I heard voices. I listened. They were Irish voices, but there were so many freight cars that I could n't, in the darkness, discover where they were.

"Who are ye?" yelled a voice in answer to my call.

"It 's mesilf," I said, "and I 'm looking for a fast train to the hills of Donegal!"

"This is it; come over here an' let 's look at ye, an' don't stand there foolin' us. Shure, we have n't had a bite to ate since th' battle of Waterloo!"

They had been shunted in there in the darkness and had not the slightest idea where they were. I piloted the fifty of them to the nearest Y, where they had something to eat and stocked up on tobacco.

In the British Army morale-raising was a hit-or-miss sort of thing. It was of more importance than guns, but nobody in the High Command had any idea of its value. A psychological department was organized. It was born late and died early. Its history has never been written. If it ever is, it will reveal the fact that psychology was bludgeoned into innocuous desuetude by the crude discipline of the old army régime. Most of the officers with whom I talked about the psychology of war seemed to think that the best use the Army could make of psychology was in dealing with cases of shell shock. I was not in a position to advise the British Army; I could only demonstrate and muddle through like the rest when the theory did n't work.

I was sent out to the 18th Division on the Somme just as the men came out of the front line for a two weeks' rest. The general was on furlough, and a brilliant young colonel was in command.

The usual custom had been to paste a notice that a speaker would give an address, and the men could please themselves whether they heard him or not. I was the only morale-raiser in France for whose addresses the troops were paraded. To the colonel I outlined my plan. He accepted it at once, and I began the *élan vital* of the division.

There was a deadlock in the minds of the soldiers. They had been fighting until war had become the natural thing. They were " fed up."

" We 've been four years 'ackin' at the' —— Germans an' we ain't beat 'em yet. They cawn't b——y well beat us — an' there you is! " was the way one Tommy expressed the deadlock. Prophecy had become stale, and life was a gamble. The mind was calloused and skeptical.

It was my job to break that deadlock. A new method, a new dynamic, was necessary. I was equipped by military experience, and I talked to them as an older comrade; I wore two bits of ribbon on my coat which reminded them that I was one of those old-timers who had served in the Gordon expedition. I had a keen sense of humor, and an array of facts that amazed them. When they had laughed with me for half an hour they were mine. I was one of them. When recounting the experiences of my youth, I gave them in the Irish dialect. When I carried them along with me into a larger world, I used the best English at my command. I never could understand the point of view of men who imagined they had to use crude or brutal language in order to make a hit with the soldiers. I think they fooled themselves. Unlettered men have keen intuitions; they could see through the camouflage. Some padres were egregious offenders in this respect. To expound a philosophy of religion in the language of Billingsgate is like dressing the Venus de Milo in the rags of a washerwoman in order to draw attention to her beauty.

War arouses all the fear instincts. All men have fear, in varying degrees. I analyzed fear so that every man could distinguish it from its results. I told a story about the Duke of Wellington. An artist who was painting his portrait said, " My lord, I should like to see the look you had on your face at Quatre Bras!" "Oh," said the Duke, "if you want me as I was that morning, paint me crawling on my belly in a ditch!"

I varied the application according to circumstances. To a battalion of boys all under twenty years of age, in an orchard, gathered in a circle around me, I spoke in closing as follows: "What is this thing we call Glory? Have we sons of the working class no share in it? Is it something reserved for a select few? Glory is woven in homespun as much as in silk. The glory of a general arises out of the glory of his men. England is glorious in proportion as her people — all her people — have a chance to contribute to that which makes her immortal. The soul of England is the English Tradition, and Tradition has no grave. It never dies. It is a procession of noble deeds and beautiful thoughts. Men are important or unimportant as they contribute to the procession. In this world crisis England is straitened. Her men are in the crucible. The procession is passing, and you lads are making the maximum contribution. Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends, his race, his nation!" These words seem trivial in print, but they had an electric effect when they were burned into the consciousness of youth. In a few weeks' time half of those lads had made the great sacrifice.

Every branch of the division received the best I had, and every man in the division became my friend.

And their cheers — I can hear them now; I shall hear them as long as life remains. I gave talks on literature. I outlined an educational scheme and helped to choose an educational director. I went to Dieppe and selected two thousand volumes for a divisional library. The division was covered in a week, and it was a complete job in morale-raising. I was on my feet talking an average of seven hours a day. When the car taking me to Mers for a day's rest drew up at the door of the inn the driver found me crumpled up in a heap in the back seat. I was carried in and put to bed. Two days later I was on my way to another appointment.

Mediocrity is intellectual astigmatism — a defect in the refractory mechanism of the mind's eye. Those afflicted with it are usually the inefficient good who mistake innocence for virtue and incapacity for moral character. They are usually cross-eyed in ethics and orthodox in religion. They constitute in any group the good which is the enemy of the best. On the whole the British Y was a splendid body of men. No British Tommy was ever heard to say, as the American doughboys said, " That damned Y." Just the same, when conscription took the best, the Y had to make selections from what was left, and some strange fish were found in the Y kettle.

To be sent from the work of inspiring a whole division to an area whose Y leader was a mediocrity and a colossal bluffer to boot was bewildering to me. In this area were large crowds of " crocked " men, venereal-diseased men, and other aggregations of nondescript noncombatants. All men are important, but all are not equally important. The fighting units needed what I had to give, and I was sent as a sop to the vanity of a man whose strong point was his cash turnover in the sale of cigarettes, tea, coffee, and cakes. He was ill-mannered, insolent to military leaders, untidy in dress, and lazy. Yet he fooled the Y to the top of their bent. They thought he was great — think so still. He was decorated with an O. B. E.

I never fell foul of him. I saw through him at once, and became even to him a morale-raiser. To do that, to do it gracefully, with patience and coöperation, was an achievement. My whole being quivered with loathing as I addressed these crowds of men who had put themselves out of the fight by sexual disease. Yet I made them laugh and I made them think. I gave them the best I had. The leader never heard me speak. He was too lazy. I spoke often to a dozen men when had it not been for my loyalty to the Y leaders and programme I could have gone outside the hut and corralled thousands.

General Jackson, commanding the 50th Division, had heard of me in the War Office, and made a special request that I be sent to his division in the Dieppe area. There I did for the 50th Division what I had done for the 18th. Five generals made up their minds that the War Office should take me over and keep me doing the real work. But I was loyal to the Y and hoped for the best. The Honorable Artillery Company has a regimental history that runs back to the middle of the twelfth century. It was a distinguished unit during the war, and went through it without having a court-martial — a very remarkable tribute to discipline and spirit. The commanding officer had heard about me, and by his special request I was sent there. In introducing me he said I was the " funniest man in France " — a statement he amplified by telling two of my stories. Such an introduction, of course, is fatal to humor. It would have paralyzed a Mark Twain.

My task was one of the most difficult I had ever known. I could n't count on humor, and I would n't risk stories, since the best I knew had been murdered by the commandant. I politely disclaimed all credit for the reputation the commandant had given me. " It is with the Irish, gentlemen, in the matter of humor, as it is with the English in the matter of war — we just blunder into it and blunder out again. The things you English would consider funny are to me very serious — in fact, our stupidity is often looked upon as humorous. When I became a writer I joined a literary club in New York. I used to see men play a game called poker — I am sure nobody here ever heard of the game. It 's peculiarly an American institution. Well, I had never played cards, but when I saw men get such a barrel of fun out of ' penny ante ' I thought I should like to learn. So I was told the value of certain card combinations — and here let me explain some of these." A roar of laughter greeted this assumption of innocence — a nest of inveterate poker players were sitting right in front of me. "Well," I continued, "I got a hand, and one of the five cards seemed worthless, so I asked for another. Two of the four players were satisfied with what they got at first. So the chips began to pile up. I seemed to hold on — in fact, they all gave in. The last man to succumb asked me what I had. Not being as familiar as are old-timers with the names of the cards, I said: ' I have four ones.' "

This set the place in a roar. My face was as devoid of a smile as a wooden Indian's.

"Well, would you believe it," I continued, when they had quieted down, "that man who made me show what I had seemed annoyed, and he said, ' What the hell did you want — five? ' Of course those ' ones ' were aces, I may explain."

Three or four stories set me right, and I gave my lecture. When I finished, the commandant rose amid wild cheering and said: "I think you will all agree with me that this is an occasion for H. A. C. fire." The officers rose to their feet instantly and, moving their right hands from side to side as if they held bombs, made a fizzing sound as they did so. After nine moves they gave a wild yell. This peculiar salutation, I was told, is very rarely given. Even in

France it was only given to such men as the Prince of Wales and the Earl of Derby, who commanded the corps. To me it was of small concern that it was given. That it was evoked was important.

With the 4th Brigade of Guards I had a similar experience. The Brigade was made up of three battalions — Coldstream, Grenadier, and Irish Guards. They were the very flower of British youth. After I had addressed the junior officers an effort was made to have me assigned for exclusive service to young subalterns just entering France. But I was in France to serve Tommy Atkins — a million of him — and I could not be diverted. I had believed all my life that the Irish had a keener sense of humor than the English. That is a belief quite generally held, I think. Incessantly talking to troops of the three kingdoms, I noticed the difference in these tribes as they reacted to humor. General Butler, in command of the Guards, was an Irishman. He was going to listen to me all day. I asked him to note the difference between the English and Irish as they reacted to humor. He did, and was as amazed as I had been. He said the Coldstream and Grenadier Guards were quicker by a large margin in their reactions. For me, until experience convinced me, this was as easy to believe as to believe that all Scotchmen were thriftless. I was just as amazed, however, when a group of Irish Guardsmen asked me if I would meet them privately and talk to them about religion. Outside the camp, on a hillside in a clump of trees, I met a hundred men from all battalions and talked to them of that which was common to all religions — the cultivation of the Kingdom of God in the human heart.

I was ordered to visit the Field Marshal's headquarters and address his staff officers — a small army in themselves. Going to Montreuil was like going to Tibet. It was supposed to be a great privilege and something of an honor. To those in line for honors and privileges I presume it was; but I was not in line. I went there with a hope in my heart that if the staff approved I should be given freedom to do my work with the real fighting men, division by division, as long as my strength held out or the war lasted.

I addressed the staff in two groups — one at 6 and the other at 9 P. M. I was told to talk to them as if they were all Tommies. What I should have liked to do was to repeat an address I once gave to the officers of a division, when I said: " Gentlemen, I am Tommy Atkins. I died on the Somme in 1916. I have come back from the dead for an hour to tell you what I think of you." Which I proceeded to do.

During the first fifteen minutes here at Haig's headquarters the atmosphere was cold. The officers sat like gravestones coldly examining this new specimen. A very profane thought fluttered through my brain. Its expression would have produced shell shock. So I began to tell some stories that were not on the programme.

" An Australian sheep farmer bumped into a staff officer on the Strand. The digger apologized as any sheep farmer would. 'Why don't you salute me?' asked the irritated officer. 'Kid,' said the Australian, 'I 'm not here for physical exercise!' "

This story gave some facial latitude, a rehearsal for a smile. The next one made them laugh, and when they were thawed out I went on with my talk; at the close they applauded generously. But there was as much chance of getting a new idea adopted, especially a psychological idea, as there would be of passing a prohibition bill in the House of Commons. At the second meeting I jollied them, and when they were slow to catch a joke I would say, " Never mind that one, gentlemen — I have another! " When I got away from that stifling atmosphere of pomp, red tape, bowing and scraping, and fear, I had an idea that I should like to get drunk or do something ridiculous — just for a change.

Calais was a great base of operations — camps, hospitals, arsenals, ammunition dumps, bakeries, shoemakers' shops. One shoe-repairing shop had two thousand cobblers — shoes taken from the feet of the dead were brought here and fitted for the living. Always about half a million men going and coming. My programme there was in the hands of a timid, dim-witted assistant. On the way to Dunkirk he advised me to be very careful what I said to the Base

Commandant. He was queer and might handle me roughly, and perhaps veto our programme.

We entered the great ogre's office. He sat at the other end of the room. I was introduced.

" What were you doing in Egypt? " asked the Base Commandant. He had n't heard the introduction, but he had seen the two bits of ribbon on my coat.

" I was in the Navy," I said. " What were you doing in that show? "

" In the Navy also! " He had been an admiral, and was now a colonel.

He came to the first meeting. It had such an effect upon him that he called up the Admiral of the Fleet to bring his sailors and marines ashore — he had a treat for them. That day I addressed eight meetings. The last was a mass meeting. The place was crowded. Before I began he ordered all the canteens to be kept open an extra hour.

" Boys," said the colonel in closing the meeting, " is n't it good to think that so many of our lads went over the top with this man's word ringing in their ears? Have a good look at his face. Did you ever see a man so young at his age? Why, we were fighting in Egypt together before most of you were born! It 's the spirit of the man that keeps him so young, and that spirit he has shared with us to-night in a wonderful way. Let 's begin the cheering all over again! "

Next day a car took me to a hut in the Calais area. About a dozen men were there. " We don't get many men to meetings here," the secretary said, " but as you 've been sent here and these men expect a meeting, perhaps you 'd better go ahead."

" No," I said, " I will not talk to a dozen men when I can just go outside, clap my hands, and get a thousand. Let's have a cup of tea and a smoke." While we were having the tea in came the Deputy Adjutant General and his staff. I knew at once that he had been apprised of my presence in his area and had come to hear me. I explained the situation.

" There are twelve or fifteen hundred men in a moving-picture show over there," I said, " and if you will ask the manager to give me ten minutes between the reels I will demonstrate that the men prefer my speech to the pictures. Now that 's a bold thing to say, but you 're a good sport, and you have the power."

The challenge was accepted and I was given ten minutes. I had my watch in hand. They were in the midst of a boisterous outburst of laughter, but I stopped abruptly. They yelled for me to go on. I stopped at the end of a second ten minutes, and then the Deputy Adjutant General said that since the men preferred my talk to pictures I had better go right on and finish in my own time. I talked for one hour and twenty minutes. The only military report I ever saw on my work was the one made on that meeting. " His audience was spellbound," said the report, " and I consider his address to have been of the very highest military and educational value. He is very eloquent, and has an extremely engaging personality, which is enhanced by the fact that he speaks as a soldier to soldiers and wears the Egyptian ribbons of 1884. I consider the troops in France should have the fullest opportunity of hearing him."

I saw this report because the Y was severely criticized in it and I was asked to square the Y with the military authorities. I did so. I always stood by them and their programme, even when to do so was disadvantageous to my own ideas. Scores of reports like this one went to the Intelligence Department. No notice whatever was taken of them. My opportunities to do things on a large scale came by chance or good luck, and knowing something of the stupidity of War Office officials I was glad to be used as much as I was.

On several occasions I happened to be of service to the Australian troops. While still in England I was sent to Wareham, where there were six thousand Australian troops just returned from Gallipoli. They wanted furloughs and furloughs were to be had, but transportation was difficult. Few trains were running. The " diggers," as they were called, were not under the command of the British Army. So the discipline was perhaps more loose and variable. They took possession of one train and transported themselves to the metropolis. Such a thing may be done once, but a second attempt encounters difficulties. There was a riot. Half a hundred military policemen and many diggers found cots in hospital. In fact, when I went there the hospital was full and it looked as if another would be needed.

Pickets of a hundred men marched up and down the streets. The men were in an ugly mood. They had smashed messes and canteens to kindling wood, and there were many more on the agenda for future treatment. The Y man was about to decamp with his goods and chattels. All meetings were off. There was nothing for me to do.

"Then you can just imagine that I have n't arrived," I said. I went into the public houses and pool rooms and soon got a line on the situation. The human dynamo behind the rebellion was an Ulster Irishman. I found him, won my way to his better nature, matched my brains against his, and in the end used him to carry out my programme. I proposed an entertainment for the rioters! The Y man agreed to give the hut.

I gave them an hour of laughter — hearty, boisterous, rollicking laughter. At the close I asked if they wanted another "one-man brass band." Yes, they did. Next morning the second in command called on me early. How many times could I speak in a day? Well, I did n't know, but I could speak until I dropped.

"We want you to extend yourself before the whole camp, and we will parade them in lots of five hundred."

So I began, and gave the best that was in me until all the units had been covered. For five minutes at the close of each address I made an appeal for sanity in the crisis. I stayed a week. Officers and men held a mass meeting as a farewell and men of all ranks made speeches. Such a meeting is unthinkable in any other army in the world.

In France after a meeting I was called aside by an officer. He told me of an ugly situation which had developed on the Australian front. Men had been promised leave, and, the promise not being kept, they marched out of the line. They were put under arms and confined in the old fortress in Péronne. I was to go there and see whether I could do anything. I had no written order, no credentials of any sort. So I went to the old fortress and, as a sight-seer, asked to be shown over it. The sergeant at the gate told me the men were not allowed visitors.

" Look here," I said. " Let me tell the men some funny stories. Come and listen for a few minutes and have a laugh. If you don't like it, I will leave."

He took a chance and admitted me. The men had been there some days, and were angry and rebellious over the fact that they had no cigarettes. I gathered them together and talked for an hour. Then they told me their side of the story. I got permission to come again the following day, but the men proposed to stage a boxing match in my honor that night. It was a great show.

The following day I gave another address and attacked the problem with ungloved hands. The war was certainly nearing the end, I assured them. How absurd, therefore, that for them it should end with a court-martial hanging over their heads. It was nothing more than a boyish obstinacy anyway, which but for a kindly go-between might have sullied the records of some of the best fighting men in France. I obtained permission to *administer* cigarettes. Lady Nicotine, — the most bewitching female in the war, — much healthy laughter, some sound common sense, and these lines from R. W. Service were the determining factors in settling a digger family quarrel: —

There are those who drift out in the desert of doubt,
There are some who in brutishness wallow;
There are others I know who in piety go
Because of a heaven to follow.
But to labor with zest and to give of your best
Because of the joy of the giving,
To help folks along with a hand and a song,
Ah, that 's the real essence of living.
          Carry on, carry on!
Believe in your mission, greet life with a cheer,
There is big work to do and that 's why you are here.
          Carry on, carry on!
And at last as you die let this be your cry,
          " Carry on, my Soul, carry on! "

XI

TALKING TO KEEP UP COURAGE

I WAS called to Flexicourt to address a large gathering of officers of the Fourth Army Corps, commanded by Sir Henry Rawlinson. The meeting was in a large marquee tent, and I was ten minutes late. Half a dozen generals stood outside the side entrance. I walked briskly from the car and, saluting them, announced myself with an apology for my lateness, due to a faulty tire.

" Well, sir," the senior general said, " you come to us with a wonderful reputation — can you live up to it? " His tone and look seemed half in fun yet wholly in earnest. I could n't sit down and think it over, so I just blurted out what came to me: —

" No, sir, I can't; but I can blunder along like the rest of you! "

There was a moment's silence, during which I again saluted and passed into the tent. The generals followed me, and as they took the seats reserved for them they were still laughing.

At that meeting my humor failed. Before I had been speaking five minutes I became possessed of a sense of sadness. The audience was mentally restless and so affected me that I abandoned my usual appeal and spoke of the immortality of the soul and the glory of adding something to the tradition of the race. Where had my reputation gone? What would the generals think of such an address?

"Just the thing we all needed," said one of the generals, and the others concurred. I understood it all when, in Sir Henry Rawlinson's room half an hour later, he told me that his army was going into action at four in the morning. When I told him how I felt at the meeting and how I was unconsciously led from the beaten track, he said I had just addressed many men who in twelve hours would be in their graves. "You did n't know; they did n't, either; but both of you got it by intuition." I was kept addressing various units until midnight — the Royal Canadian Dragoons, trench-mortar men, Strathcona Horse, and machine-gun units. Then at the window of my billet on the main street I sat and watched the long procession of guns and men pass along to be swallowed up in the mouth of hell. They were singing now, — singing the old songs with the old gusto, — but at dawn thousands of them would be leaving a vacant place in the heart of the world.

At four the guns belched forth their lava of death. At seven I was in the general's map room listening to the record of the three hours' slaughter. At eight I was off again to the reserves — more mind-sweeping, more speeches to crowds within the range of the guns. Then suddenly, as I addressed a battalion, my voice ceased. I was talking, but there was no sound. I realized the situation instantly, and indicated to the commander that I was " all in." For a moment the men laughed, but when they saw tears streaming down my cheeks they broke into cheers, and I could hear them still cheering when I was on my way toward the Fourth Army Medical Corps.

I was ordered to London. Medical men warned me that I had exhausted the life force of years in a few months; I was to make up my mind to an inevitable collapse. I became haggard. My eyes sunk in my head. I was weak. At Calais another examination confirmed the first. They ticketed and labeled me for a London hospital. In my inner consciousness I did n't believe a word the doctors said, but there were disabilities I could not deny. Even if I had come to the end of my rope, I was satisfied — better a thousand times to wear out than to rust out, and it had been a wonderful experience.

Instead of going to a hospital I went to the home of a mental healer, a man I knew. I wrote on a slip of paper: " How soon can you get me back to France? " I heard him laugh, but knew no more for some hours. I had collapsed. When I came back to consciousness my friend was sitting beside me. He picked up the slip of paper and showed it to me, and said, " In a few days." The words sent a glow all through my body. I took some warm milk and went to sleep. I slept for six hours, and when I awoke I got up — tottering, it is true; but my voice had come back, and hope revived. In a few days I was quite ready to return. I wrote a letter to the Adjutant General, asking him to permit me to dispense with the ghastly stock collar that always seemed to suffocate me. It was hurtful to my voice and irritating to my mind. I begged the Y officials to intercede for me. It was the only favor I had ever asked either from the Government or from the Y. The former ignored it, and the latter looked upon it as one of my pleasantries and evaded it. I was so sure that I should be accorded this privilege that I had a khaki jacket made with a turned-down collar.

I was in Abbeville when it suffered its first terrible bombing from the air. I had spoken six times that day, an hour each time. Very tired, I went to my billet, a room in the house of a wine merchant who at that time was on the French front. I stood at the open window, but hearing the well-known *um-um-um* of the German planes in the distance I ran downstairs. Only the servant girl was there. Her mistress was out, and the little eight-year-old girl was in bed. I picked the child up in my arms and carried her to the cellar. The servant followed. I had just entered the door when the bombs began to drop. The walls trembled, the earth shook. Those were the first bombs that had ever fallen on the city. In that one raid they destroyed half of Abbeville. When the " all clear " was sounded by the British bugles I came up with the child — to find that half of the house had been blown away. The mother returned, and, seeing the place in ruins, fainted. Somebody found her in the yard. When I presented her with her little girl she became hysterical with ecstasy. Then I went out and spent the rest of the night dragging the dead out of the débris.

I was in the Étaples area. Three hundred thousand men were there. I had been around for nearly a week — borne about like a bag of flour from one part of the district to another to speak to small groups. One night there was a big entertainment. The " talent " did n't turn up and the leaders were commandeering anything they could get hold of to pad the programme. By this time I was inured to the hit-or-miss methods and took things as they came, in big lots or small doses. I suggested that I could help them out. It was a big crowd, and I just opened up all the stops and held them for an hour. The Y staff woke up — they really did — and thereafter I was busy.

One night in an air raid about seven hundred men were killed. Next morning the London papers charged the Germans with bombing hospitals. One German airman was brought down, unhurt. When he was before the commanding officer he showed photographs of the area. There was not a single red cross painted on a hospital, and around the hospitals were ammunition dumps, railways, and camps with tens of thousands of men, including the Life Guards.

When the English Tommies read the papers they were angry, and the general comment was: "It ain't cricket."

A Scotch regiment had quite a different reaction. Many of their friends had been killed, and as a reprisal they made up their minds to break into the German prison camps and bayonet the prisoners. I was let into the secret of the intended reprisal and made it my business to prevent murder by informing those in command. Every evening thereafter for some weeks the embittered troops were marched to the seaside and marched back in the morning.

The morning after the raid red crosses were painted on the hospitals and photographed before the paint was dry. These photographs were published as evidence of German ruthlessness.

In the Étaples area two colonels imagined they saw in me a force they would like to annex to their respective units. One commanded a Machine Gun Training School, and the other a school where they taught the use of the bayonet. They requisitioned me temporarily, but I had no desire to be limited by the machine-gun unit, and I loathed instructions which taught how to run a bayonet into a man so as to produce death — with the maximum amount of agony. I was grateful, however, for the thought behind the proposal. Some of the best friends I made in France were men in these two schools.

After four grueling years man power was getting low. The flowers of youth had been mown down. The reaper had not yet completed his work. There were hundreds of thousands of broken men in convalescent camps. They were broken not only physically, but mentally as well. They were tired of war. I was sent into these camps to re-create the will to fight. Melancholy job! I exploded all the little pellets of mental dynamite. This work was very hard. A partial paralysis seemed to creep through me as I entered. I had to overcome it quickly, launch into my fund of humor, and make them laugh. It was in these camps that they called me " the sunshine man." As I look back I wonder they did n't curse me. They did n't. They looked upon me as a rejuvenator of their minds and souls. Always and forever, whereever I went, I had my smash at war. Strange to say, I never met a general who did not agree with me. The men applauded it — more, these broken men were willing to go back into it on the strength of my assurance that this was " a war to end war."

I addressed the Irish divisions, both from Ulster and from the South. In addition to the usual address I ventured to say that if I had been younger I should have liked to go back to Ireland and be a sort of Father Mathew — asking the people of that troubled island to put the teaching of the New Testament to a practical use in exercising more love and toleration toward each other. When I was with the Connaught

Rangers they were up at Ste. Émilie, within five kilometres of the German front. The Rangers were playing football, and the Germans sent over some shells to disturb the game. I suggested to a player that a shell might have dropped between the goals.

"Well, if it had dropped in the first half, Yer Honor," he said, "it would n't have been so bad, for in that case our side would have won — we were one goal ahead then."

During September and October 1918 I had the greatest satisfaction in my work. I made use of the last ounce of my energy, and enjoyed every day of the whirlwind of activity. The fighting men knew little of the power-of-mind stuff; the camp followers knew less. I blamed nobody, criticized nothing. I looked upon every day as a little lifetime in itself, and functioned to the extent of my ability in its given tasks.

One day a general told me that I must rest. He said he did n't want the responsibility of killing me. A few minutes later a man told me of having seen a son of mine in an American army unit. The general gave me a car and a driver and I went off hundreds of kilometers and found him. We had a day together. Then I had a day off in Péronne. As a vacation it was out of the ordinary. As a change it was unique.

When the Germans were swept back the Y advanced with the troops. Five new Y stations had to be established in one day. I took charge in Péronne that day. The first item was the marching of German prisoners from their stockade to the Y on St. Fursy Street, where they were put to work renovating the wrecked building. The mayor of the town gave me an orderly, and I sent him for the prisoners. All he had to do was to fix a bayonet in his rifle and march beside them. But he was an Army Service Corps man and had never handled a rifle. I got him an old German rifle-and-saw bayonet, put him through a few moves, and marched him off. He brought the prisoners, but as they marched into the yard it was a German cavalryman who carried the rifle on his shoulder and not the orderly.

When I assigned the men to their work I began to take stock of the Y larder. Uncle Remus's receipt for rabbit pie was: " Fust you done gone catch a nice fat rabbit." The rabbit of the Y larder was bully beef, — six cans, — a pound of margarine, and eleven potatoes. There was n't a shop within fifty miles. Two American officers called, and they were starving. While I was wondering what I could give them, an orderly came in for a gallon of petrol. Certainly, but what had he to trade for it? A loaf of bread. Fine! I gave him the petrol and went with him for the bread. In a corner of the hut — it was the office of the military police — I saw a small box of onions. I got them for a hundred cigarettes. I returned and fed the Americans on coffee and bread. A young officer looking for a ride toward Calais came in. Through him I got in touch with the Transport Department. They would lend us a lorry to bring stores from Amiens if we would give them a thousand francs' worth of cigarettes. I made the deal.

A weary subaltern came for a night's lodging. Yes, of course, in return for service. "You have rank and prestige," I said; "just lend me your dignity for the rest of the day, and we will see you to the coast to-morrow." He went foraging, and his achievements added considerably to our comfort, if not to our reputation. All forenoon men from all parts of the front came straggling in, for tea, for cigarettes, for the *Daily Scream,* for stamps. The orderly reported that a German prisoner was doing something reprehensible upstairs. I found him having a bath in a tin dish, and punished him by making him peel the onions. Later I saw that the prisoners all had a bath.

The prisoners fared poorly in food that noontime. Rice and raisins and a drink made with a yellow powder supposed to make lemonade were all they got. It was all we had. A message came from a part of the front line that a brigade of artillery had n't a cigarette among them. I got a car and a driver, took ten thousand packages of cigarettes and a case of biscuits, and went up the line. Our destination was just beyond Maissemy, but we lost our way. We drove up a hill in order to get a view, and at the top we found ourselves between the German and British balloons. As soon as we stopped, a shell whizzed over our heads. I saw a Red Cross sign about two hundred yards away, with two men standing beside it. We left the car and joined them in order to find out where we were, and a quick succession of shells led us to believe that our car perhaps was the objective. The red cross marked a casualty clearing station — a hole in the ground, twenty feet deep.

In the Red Cross dugout we were treated to tea and made comfortable as long as the strafing continued. To our amazement the car was there when we returned — and intact. We found the Artillery and distributed the cigarettes and biscuits. The men came at us for the cigarettes like famished wolves; I had never seen men so frenzied. Cool and calm when around them fellow humans were being blown to shreds — and half crazy for want of a cigarette! I made a short speech to each battery; then returned to Péronne and resumed the problem of providing a meal for half a dozen hungry Y men.

I fried the onions on a boiler lid. When well done I mixed them with the bully beef, and over that I grated some cheese. The eleven potatoes I cut up and stuck into the stuff like eggs in a salad. There were some strange and unusual odors, but a severe dose of pepper allayed their vehemence. The prisoners had cleaned the place. The tablecloth was a clean newspaper. When the famished workers returned they were overjoyed to see such a nice layout. Oh, yes, I forgot — we had soup.

"What did you make that soup of?" asked the leader.

"A ham bone."

"Where did you get it?"

"In the cellar."

"That was n't ham," he said. "It was the hip joint of a mule."

"Well, in that case, you 'll have a strong kick in your work to-morrow."

I imagined he was joking about the mule, but in visiting remount camps later I often dined on mule. When the vets found that they could n't cure a sick or wounded mule, they ate him.

I was ordered to the Vosges. The Independent Air Force was there. On the way I went through Paris. I had a letter of introduction to the head of the American Y in France. I found him barricaded in one of the most beautiful palaces in France. He was surrounded with a small army of men who guarded him with as much care and swank as if he had been the mogul of Kandahar. No general engaged in the war was so difficult to see. It was amazing and amusing. One would have imagined he was managing the war. The Americans were new brooms, sweeping clean and taking themselves very seriously.

I had to take a train to the Vosges. One went through Chaumont. It left Paris every morning. Whenever I had used French railways I had always offered the civilian rates, but they had always given me the soldiers' rate — without my asking for it. This time I only had enough for the military rate and they demanded the full civilian fare. I was ten francs short. In half an hour the train would leave and if I could n't get the ten francs I should lose a day. Time was to me of more importance than gold. I made up my mind to borrow ten francs from anybody taking that train who would lend it. This train always carried over a hundred Americans. I planted myself in the line of march to the barrier and began what was one of the most humiliating experiences of my career. I had only twenty minutes. On they came, British and Americans. I told my story to the first man with Y badges — an American. He listened to a few sentences and then moved on. I tried another and another of the same kind, and they looked at me as if I had been trying to sell them oil stock. They were gruff and uncivil, and some of them positively insulting. A British captain came along. I pulled out my white pass, my passport, and identity book — but, "Sorry," he said, and walked on. If Jesus Christ had stood there in my garb and in my condition He could n't have wrung a nickel out of any of His followers.

I got that train. I did what the whole embattled world seemed to be doing just then — I bluffed. When the whistle blew, I gathered up my bags and made a mad rush through the barrier, as if I were merely late. I pushed the guard aside, threw my things on the moving train, and jumped in after them! When the conductor came along half an hour later, I handed him *le tarif militaire.*

I arrived at Joinville about midnight. The little station was crowded with English, American, French, and Portuguese troops. The Tommies and the doughboys got into a heated argument which developed into a battle royal. It was a great show for the French and Portuguese. I stood by until they had biffed each other up and down the platform and in and out of the station. When I thought they had had enough I interfered, and the voice and personality that could n't raise ten francs in Paris were quite effective as a peacemaker in the "English-Speaking Union." I corralled them all in the station house and told funny stories until the two o'clock train came in at half-past five and we went our ways.

I noticed one peculiar thing about the Independent Air Force. They had no tradition. In the British Army and Navy there are certain unwritten laws and a man learns them before he learns anything else. For instance, no man can be profane and get away with it; and although every officers' mess, whether it was a mudhole or a palace, had wine and liquor of all varieties, during all my service in France *I saw but one officer drunk.* The Air Force were splendid flying men, but the *esprit de corps* of the old army were shockingly lacking. General Trenchard was supposed to be the genius of the air. His men called him a " nigger-driver," but they had profound respect for him. This force in the Vosges had no nexus whatever with any other branch of the service. They were bombing the German railheads night and day. For my speeches they were paraded as the battalions had been on the western front. One of the flying aces put me through an ordeal that I think would kill me now. He asked me if I would like a flip in the air. Yes, of course. Up we went through the clouds to a distance of ten thousand feet. Then he nose-dived. I had the feeling that everything inside me was coming out at the top of my head! When he flattened out he looked behind and yelled an inquiry about my health. " Fine! " I yelled back. I had been in tanks and submarines and I had gone over the German lines in a French plane, but this " flip " in the air, however it may have established me with the corps, was my last.

I saw two powerful planes prepared to bomb Berlin. Each of them carried several tons of high explosives. But they never got a take-off. The day they were to start out the Armistice was signed and the show was off.

It was a cold, windy afternoon, November 11, 1918. A squadron was paraded and I delivered my farewell address. I was treated in that last appearance before the airmen as if I had been an inspecting general. At the close there were cheers and the presentation to me of the last broken propeller of the war.

That night Nancy, only fifteen kilometres away, was a scene of the wildest revelry. I went along as a stretcher-bearer in case of convivial casualties. The British and French walked the streets ten abreast with locked arms, singing songs in different languages. Bands were playing, flags were flying, and the whole populace was in an ecstasy of hysterical joy.

Next night the officers had a farewell dinner. I was the guest of honor. I was asked what the officers could do for the noncommissioned officers and mechanics.

" Give them a dinner," I advised, " and all you officers put aprons on and wait upon them."

They liked the idea and arranged it. When the dinner was all ready, the chaplain, a very fine fellow, was asked to say grace. Instead, he launched into a prayer. The commanding officer sidled up to me and whispered: " Good heavens! He 's spoiling the whole show. Can't you stop him? " When the chaplain finished his prayer I was standing beside him. The men had seen me steal quietly to the front.

" Listen! " I said as I raised my hand. " The commanding officer asks me to give out a notice before we begin to eat. *No tips to-night!* The officers are just back on their old jobs! " It took a moment or two to register. When it did, there was a roar of laughter and the equilibrium was reëstablished.

A great mass meeting of civilians and soldiers, soldiers of various nations, was held in a theatre to say farewell to General Trenchard. It was a sincere, spontaneous outburst of gratitude and admiration. I wrote the farewell address and the Y secretary delivered it; but the general made it rather a dumb show by refusing to appear.

It fell to my lot to look after the men released from German prison camps near the border. They straggled into Azelot, mere ghosts, dressed in all kinds of rags — some in German uniforms. One of the first to come in was a boy from my native town in Ireland. I went to Nancy and wired his people that he was safe.

" The Americans have been lending us singers and speakers," said a colonel to me one day, " and we should like to reciprocate by lending you to them. Will you go? " This was at Autigny-le-Tour.

" Yes, gladly. It will be interesting to be lent to my own people! " He had not labeled me in his mind as an American.

I was driven to Châtillon and handed over to the American Y. The man who was to pilot me around had been a preacher for many years. He took me to the officers' mess for luncheon. It was an old château which had been Joffre's headquarters. The sitting room was littered with newspapers and magazines. It was dirty and disorderly. When I was announced I accompanied the Y man to the dining room. I was introduced to a major who wore both British and French decorations. He was the senior officer and head of the mess. His abruptness and lack of cordiality were somewhat disconcerting, but I imagined it was because I wore the Y uniform.

Two orderlies brought in meat and potatoes and laid them on the table, which was covered with a dirty oilcloth. The activity which began at once was without ceremony. Each man pulled toward himself what he wanted. They were all serious and silent. I sat beside the Y man. I looked upon him as my host. He helped himself.

" It 's every man for himself here," he said.

" And being hindermost," I replied, " I know what 's happening to me."

He laughed, and I used a boarding-house reach to help myself. It was the crudest thing in social fellowship I had witnessed. There was a Yale man in that group, and I felt that I could talk frankly to him. Yes, this was " rather characteristic," and at first he felt ashamed of it, but later he got used to it and submerged his own sense of values.

If two British officers had lunch together in a trench filled with dead men, they would turn one of the dead men over, pin a napkin on him, and use him as a table. If they had a potato or an onion only and a third man came along, they would share what they had with the newcomer — and serve him first. At home in civil life the Americans would be courteous. The unwritten British tradition demands that the amenities be observed whether they eat in a mudhole or in a mess. The mess, to a British officer, is the extension of his club or his home. I agree with Sherman that war is hell, but I deny the corollary that those engaged in it are necessarily fiends or boors.

Since the American Y was in such bad repute, my failure was a foregone conclusion. A notice was stuck on a hut door, and sometimes a dozen came — sometimes more and sometimes less. They did n't even provide a car to take me to the various appointments. It was a great relief when a British car came and carried me away. Another day with the Guerrilla Cloudriders, and then, lugging along my broken propeller, I set my face toward London.

XII

COURAGE AFTER PEACE

I HADN'T gone very far before finding that there were calls from all over France for my services. I chose the 50th Division. I knew them, or what were left of the old crowd. They were at Doulers. General Jackson was still in command. Unit by unit, I addressed them on the problems involved in demobilization. I toned them up for the new difficulties as I had nerved them for the old.

One day the General informed me that the King was to inspect the Division and that I was to be presented to His Majesty, if I cared for the honor. He thought there might be something in the American mind opposed to royal recognition. And that reminds me that once in a speech I had referred to a time when the American colonists "told George III where to get off; and we 're now telling George the — what 's the King's number?" I asked the audience, having really forgotten. The men went into spasms of laughter. It seemed the funniest thing they had ever heard. "What is his number?" The slip went so well that I deliberately used it hundreds of times afterwards to produce the laugh, and it never failed.

One high official hoped I would n't joke with the

King or tell him a funny story. He was told — but doubted it — that I knew how to behave myself before kings. Seven men of the thirty or forty thousand were selected for the honor of presentation, and we were instructed by an expert in court manners. At this juncture it suddenly occurred to me that, since the war was actually over, I could dispense with the stupid stock collar and face the King in comfort. I put on my double-breasted khaki jacket, with khaki shirt, turned-down attached collar, and four-in-hand tie. This was a luxury and made me human again.

The King had wired instructions that there were to be no ordered or formal cheers, no stiff-starched parade. The men were to be loosely arranged and left entirely to their own initiative. As I was the civilian of the group to be presented, I stood at the tail end of the line. It just happened, however, that the royal car stopped at that end and I was the first to be introduced. Englishmen are sparing in praise and incapable of fulsome flattery, but that day General Jackson certainly spread it on generously as he told the King of my services. The fact that I was an American reconciled His Majesty to my unusual uniform, and on that double-breasted jacket were two bits of ribbon which he recognized.

" But you were in Egypt," he said, looking at the ribbons.

" Yes, sir, I wore the uniform of Queen Victoria in the Gordon Relief Expedition."

"Ah," he said, "then originally you were an Englishman!"

"No, Your Majesty; originally I was just an Irishman."

The King laughed; he laughed heartily; but in my mind there was absolutely no idea of being humorous.

"Well," he said, "I thank you for coming back. I thank you for your splendid work." And a second time he extended his hand.

But that was n't all of the conversation. He asked me what "morale-raising" meant. The words seemed as unfamiliar to him as the actuality was to his High Command. A few minutes after the King had passed, the Prince of Wales came.

"I was not here when the King was talking to you," said the Prince, "but the General has been telling me about your splendid work and I want to add my thanks."

It was all over in a few minutes. The battalions melted away. The General and his staff mounted their horses and rode back to Doulers, followed by a lone lancer on a gray charger. From his long lance there fluttered in the wind a little red and white pennant — a splash of color, a touch of the old régime, that fixed in my memory an historic example of a king functioning as father to his divisions of fighting men.

It was over a cup of tea beside a warm fire in a London club that I heard the last word of the high official who had some suspicion that I should cave in before royalty.

" Well," he said, " I 'll be hanged if he did n't joke with the King after all — don't you know! "

There was an urgent call to Cambrai. Between Doulers and Cambrai lay somewhere a division with which I had more intimate associations than any other. I wired to say that I was passing through and would call to say farewell. When I arrived a stranger greeted me. The officers were all out. I waited for half an hour and then rose to go. Then the officer told me that he had instructions to send my car back.

" Then I 'm really kidnapped."

" Yes, that 's about it. Here 's a copy of a telegram I have just sent off: ' The —— th Division reports the seizure,' etc., etc. A few minutes later all my old friends came in. They said it was the only way to get me. They had been refused by G. H. Q. and the Y, so when they got my wire that I was coming they determined to hold me and let Cambrai go to blazes.

I set to work. Lectures on education, on demobilization, on the new order of things. An Army order said that the men were to be taught trades. This was a gesture, a huge bluff. Anybody who knew anything must have known that no man with a smattering of a trade could go back to England and buck the Unions. The officers knew nothing of that. It was up to me to disillusion them and give the truth. To give fifteen thousand men a rational view of human existence, to stir them and stiffen their backs for the tasks of peace, was my farewell to the battlefields of France.

Wasted in body, tired in mind, I could yet go on. When I returned to France it was on a new kind of adventure. In London I revised the manuscript of my *Life of Christ.* I had finished the first draft on slips of paper in breathing periods, in our disorderly retreat from the Somme. Now it was in the hands of the publishers. I had also finished a book called *The Man from World's End,* a series of short stories based on the love adventures of soldiers as they told them to me in France.

After the war England faced the hardest problem of her history. The men were being demobilized and there was no work for them. I think I knew something of the mind of the soldier. I feel quite certain that the dole saved England from a debacle. When I saw thousands of men marching through the streets of London rattling tin cans and begging from the passers-by I was afraid that they would recognize me. I had painted in glowing words another kind of England.

The workers, employed and unemployed, were seething with discontent. They were a barrel of gunpowder, only waiting for some provocation to act as a match to set it off. I was getting ready to go on another Y mission, to the Rhine. Mr. Lloyd George sent for me. He said the situation in industrial centres was acute and he believed I was the man to handle it, if it could be handled at all. He hoped I could remain a year in England and do in the industries what I had done on the western front.

My words were few. I accepted the invitation. He told me to see an officer of the Treasury concerning remuneration. That, I told him, I could not do. I never could talk to Labor and be in the pay of the Government. I must be absolutely untrammeled. A few friends would provide me with car fare and food. He promised to back me personally in any way I needed, and I went off.

Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and the mining regions of South Wales were the first stopping places on this part of the pilgrimage. The Prime Minister wrote personal letters to newspapers and manufacturers. All factory gates were open to me, and the newspapers noised abroad my message. I did not confine myself to factories and shops; I spoke in churches and halls and wherever working people foregathered.

In one of these large cities I was arrested and taken before a high police official, charged with neglecting, as an alien, to report myself. During the war I had observed these alien restrictions with meticulous care, and had suffered much in so doing. Now that the war was over it seemed absurd and outrageous. Before the official I was boiling with indignation.

" Does the name of Inspector Javert recall anything to your mind, sir? " I asked.

" No."

" Then any reference to him would be wasted. Let me say, sir, I am doing England a service that no man in England could do. I am the personal representative of the British Government in your district, and I have been too busy to call at a police station every time I go around a corner; and I want calmly and quietly to tell you that I 'm sick of this snooping suspicion and will report no more anywhere, nor to anybody! "

He sat at a desk. When I finished he arose and gave me one of the most stinging rebukes I had ever received. It startled me.

" I thoroughly agree with you," he said quite pleasantly, " and I shall write at once to the Home Secretary and have you excused! "

In those days the Clyde shipbuilding yards and the coal-mining region of South Wales were the red-flag spots of the Labor discontent. Lloyd George asked me which of these places I would visit first. I said, " Your fellow countrymen, sir; they are the worst." A newspaper in Cardiff heralded my coming. That a reactionary newspaper should welcome a man who was a friend of Labor was quite puzzling to the miners. I had more difficulty in overcoming the good will of the paper than I had in giving the miners a new point of view.

A veteran Labor leader had asked one of the old Labor " war horses " to preside at one big meeting.

He did so, but I could see opposition in his attitude from the start. The hall was packed with men.

" Tom Richards asked me to preside here," he began: " but I notice that this speaker is recommended by a newspaper that has no use for us — and we have none for it. Something strange about that. This paper says this man is interested in a better England. We are not. We are interested in a better Wales. The gentleman who is to speak is a mystery man. How can he be any good to us who comes with such a rotten endorsement? " In this tone and manner he went on for about fifteen minutes.

This sort of introduction was providential. It fanned into a flame all the smouldering fires of my Celtic nature.

" I 'm sorry for your chairman," I began. " I 'm sorry for this audience and Tom Richards and the newspaper. I 'm sorry for everybody concerned — except myself. Before I begin my address I want to iron out a few things. I want to take the brick out of the chairman's bouquet. He has been brutally frank. I will be just as frank without the brutality.

" When a man says he is a friend of Labor, or a champion of Labor principles, what would you consider a fair test of his loyalty? I venture to say that not a man in this hall will disagree with me when I say that service to Labor is the surest and best test. We are agreed on that. Well, then, if that be true, I challenge your chairman, I challenge any man in this audience or any man in South Wales, to lay his cards on the table before a committee selected by your chairman. I will lay mine beside them, and if that committee does not decide that I have a better right to address Labor than your chairman has, I will apologize for being here — I will apologize for my existence.

" By service to Labor I do not mean holding down a Labor job, nor do I mean Union membership for personal benefits through group organization. I mean service rendered and sacrifices made without money payments and without any material benefits whatever.

" These hands of mine are white now. They used to be black and gnarled and chipped. I worked in a coal pit in the old days for a shilling a day. Keir Hardie and I worked in the same pit. He was skilled. I was only a mucker. I was stupid, ignorant, and dirty. No slave with ball and chain ever felt his slavery keener than I felt the slavery of ignorance and dirt. I escaped. I became a soldier that I might learn to read. The necessity of a higher education drove me from these British Isles. I secured a university career; but instead of divorcing me from the working class, it knit me close to them. Without knowing anything more than a cat about Socialism, I joined the movement. I am an American citizen. The American Socialists elected me to the National Executive Committee. I am an honorary member of six great Labor Unions. I have been a minister and have been kicked out of many churches because of my loyalty to the working class. I have had the real-estate agents of an entire city combine to prevent me from renting a home. I have had newspaper opposition all through my career. I know what it is to go hungry for Labor, to be misunderstood, to be maligned and persecuted for it — and yet, Mr. Chairman and miners of South Wales, I have never been on Labor's pay roll!

" I gave up a position to come over here and lend a hand. I am against war. I learned to hate it on the battlefields of Egypt. But when men are suffering and dying by the hundreds of thousands I refuse to stand aside. So I 've been in France. I gave cheer to over a million men over there. If Socialism or Unionism or any other ism interfered with that service I would throw them aside and do it again! Men who hold down cushy jobs at home may not appreciate that, but the lads who lie in the soil of France and Flanders did, and their appreciation is my reward. I seek no other —"

Here the audience broke into cheers. I raised my voice to proceed and they stood up and cheered. There were yells of approval by men who had heard me in France.

" Let me conclude the challenge and stop," I said. " I might have used my brains and ability to make money. I am a poor man; I have no property, no capital, and I am in that position because I have given my life and influence to the oppressed, the poor, and the under dog!"

Only in a small measure can these words convey what they meant to that audience. The Welsh are a fiery people and are passionately fond of good singing and speech touched with fire. I called for an answer to the challenge and was greeted with cheers. There was no answer, and I went on with what I went there to say. When I sat down the chairman rose and said: —

"The gentleman is no longer a man of mystery. I will entertain a motion that we call him back to lecture to us on any topic he likes, and we will pay him for coming."

A full report of the meeting opened up to me the whole Rhondda Valley, where there was much fire underneath the surface of things, ready to burst forth at any minute. Once a Welsh choir of male voices came and sang for me at several big gatherings.

My message to the workers was an appeal to the spirit — a plea for patience. I was one of them, analyzing national and international situations and pointing out the tremendous difficulties involved in building a new structure on the ruins of the old. I contended that we could best serve the world and our own particular movements by playing the national game in a way best suited to national needs. Britain was short of ships, short of goods, and short of raw material. She could only survive by supplying the world with what British hands produced. Any attempt to make a radical change would inevitably turn Britain into a shambles of chaos, disorder and blood.

With the miners in Wales I was successful. It was with the politicians, profiteers, and capitalists that I seemed to fail. At the close of an arduous campaign, two mass meetings were arranged for Sunday in the largest theatre in Cardiff. It was suggested that a Labor leader preside in the afternoon and a capitalist in the evening. That suited me. At both meetings I made a strong plea for a unity of spiritual forces. By the bare hands of British workingmen was British equilibrium to be achieved. Would the workers shelve their propaganda, put aside their class antagonism, and declare an armistice? The workers said "Yes."

The afternoon meeting was presided over by a Labor leader and was all that I could desire. The chairman in the evening was a capitalist who was a parvenu, an ill-bred, uneducated man, who had made an immense fortune out of the war and whose money had carried him into Parliament. My plea for cooperation and the expression of the finer aspects of the spirit in man during the period of reconstruction was received by the vast audience with enthusiasm. To my utter amazement, the chairman turned the meeting into a protest against the United States. After my address he told the audience that the United States had demanded five hundred thousand tons of shipping. That, he said, was unfair. He boasted that he was trying to persuade the House of Commons to refuse the demand. Turning to me, he asked me to carry his protest to the President. Then he introduced two men he had brought from London for the purpose of backing him up. They were both discredited Labor leaders and renegades who had sold out to the highest bidder. For me the situation was difficult. I did n't want to lose the influence I had already exerted, nor could I let him get away with an insult.

" I am a stranger in your city," I began, " and your guest. It would ill become a guest to argue with his host, but in view of this most extraordinary proceeding I am sure you would not expect me to keep silent. I think this audience understands me. I am sure you know that what I plead for is the only thing that will see Britain through. Now as to my taking the gentleman's protest to President Wilson — don't you think it would be rather stupid in me if I asked the gentleman to take such a message from me to King George? Do you do that sort of thing over here? With us it is not done. As to the shipping, my country had no understanding, treaty, or bargain for any of the swag. If now we are asking for ships, I am ashamed. I think, however, I can mitigate the severity of the critics on the platform when I tell them that when we entered the war the crews of German ships in our harbors blew the machinery out of them and it took millions to blow it in again. As Uncle Sam has no more love for taxation than John Bull has, I am inclined to believe that if he is demanding the ships he refitted he wants them as souvenirs!

" The chairman suggests that we came into the war late. That is true, and we shall not be permitted for some time to forget it. But may I ask the gentleman behind me to consider for a moment what would have happened if we had n't come in at all? The Germans know, if he does n't. The British generals also know. Finally, I don't believe this audience will permit political strategy to dull the fine edge of our attempt tonight to appeal to the nobler qualities and values of the spirit."

Thunderous applause was the answer.

Over large areas in congested industrial centres I went to the workers, and they received me gladly. Then a call came from the Y to render assistance in raising money to provide Y tents for the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who were in the devastated areas in France. Great numbers of very wealthy English people were on the Riviera, and three of us went there — two to arrange the details, and I to address parlor meetings in the fashionable hotels around Cannes, Nice, Monte Carlo, and Mentone.

The Duke of Connaught was staying at Cannes. If he would consent to preside at some meetings the aristocracy would flock around him. We went to Cannes. My two companions saw the Duke's secretary, and he turned them down. I waited for them in the lounge. Just as we were leaving I saw a face familiar to me. The man recognized me and we advanced toward each other. He was a captain of the Guards.

" Well, well," I said, " what are you doing here? "

" I am the Duke's secretary."

" Heavens! How fortunate for us! You turned these fellows down, but you must n't turn me down! "

" Still morale-raising? " he asked, smiling.

" Yes. I 'm here to raise the morale of dukes, lords, and commons, but I can't even raise the wind without the Duke! "

He laughed and told us to wait. Five minutes later he returned and took me upstairs to meet His Royal Highness.

" My secretary has been telling me wonderful things about you," the Duke said, " and I thought you would n't mind talking while I dress for dinner."

" I am delighted, sir. I was shipmates with your brother the Duke of Edinburgh in the Mediterranean when I was a boy."

We talked, as he dressed, on many topics. He consented at once to preside and help in getting people out.

" I am informed," he said in introducing me at our first meeting, " that in the great crisis when we were with our backs to the wall this man's burning words were of more service to our men than a whole division of soldiers."

The enterprise, however, was not a financial success. The aristocrats were perfectly willing, now that the war was over, to let the soldiers go without the comfort of a place where they could get a cup of tea and a smoke. Of all the people I met down there, the Duke was the most human, the most gentlemanly, and the most democratic. To me, personally, he was more than kind. He read some of my books and took the trouble to write me several letters about them afterwards.

While on the Riviera I wrote a series of articles on Monte Carlo for a London paper. In order to get color and thrill, I went into the Casino. What a strange crowd of devotees at the altars of the god of chance! I played the tables. I wanted the whole gamut of sensations, and I got them all but one — I just did n't seem to be able to lose, no matter what colors or combinations I chose. I came out with fifteen hundred francs of their money. Next day I bought three good paintings and brought them away as souvenirs. I had an idea that if I played long enough I might win enough to sustain the soldiers' huts myself; but it would n't work. In one of my articles I alluded to the army of the Prince of Monaco in the following sentence: " Yesterday I saw a parade of the Prince's army. They were both in full-dress uniform." The editor could n't see the joke and deleted it.

When the League of Nations Union was launched in the Royal Albert Hall I was selected to " put the snapper on the whip." When an Englishman, chairman of the committee, put it to me in just that way, I warned him against the use of such picturesque phrases lest he be accused of being an American. To the English people this was a great occasion — an audience of ten thousand, and on the platform the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. John Clifford, Professor Gilbert Murray, Lord Robert Cecil, Sir Edward Grey, and the Right Honorable J. R. Clynes. After these statesmen, orators, and churchmen had spent their force in explaining this spiritual auxiliary of the League of Nations, I was to come on and in a ten- or fifteen-minute speech persuade that audience to join it then and there. The situation looked like that of a marksman with the last bullet in his rifle, to whom inaccuracy of aim meant failure. To fail here would be signal, dismal failure. But fortunately I did not fail. After an impassioned appeal, I asked those who would back the movement to stand, and the audience arose as one man.

XIII

IRELAND IN ARMS

When the Irish were copying Cromwell's methods of wholesale murder, when rebellion, arson, terror, and bloodshed were at their worst, I was invited by General Wood — with whom I had served in France — to visit the men under his command, the Auxiliary Force, in Ireland. Wood was second in command to a man who hated the Irish, and the Irish attitude toward the latter may be judged by the fact that he went to the golf links in an armored car! That he did n't join the "hole-in-one club" was n't the fault of the Irish sharpshooters. Some of them told me, when peace came, that they never thought of him as a soldier — they looked upon him as a rat, and would have shot him as one if they had ever had a chance.

What could I do in Ireland? Wood thought he knew. Every member of the Auxiliary had been a British officer. I could give these men some idea of Irish psychology — something the British had been shy of for seven centuries. I could tell them that they were not there to fight the Irish, but to preserve peace. Theirs was a thankless, dangerous job, and every man engaged in it would have thrown it aside instantly if he could have got anything else to do.

So I joined General Wood at Beggar's Bush Barracks in Dublin. When he set out on a tour of inspection I went with him.

I had dedicated *My Lady of the Chimney Corner* to Lady Gregory and the players of the Abbey Theatre, but I was not very sanguine about its reception in Ireland, where many books are written and few bought. I found, however, that it was well known in Dublin. I found it a good introduction to the leaders of the rebellion. I wanted to meet them, especially Michael Collins. I was warned not to go on that trip, but I went. I rode always with the General in his car. An armored car in front and one behind gave some sense of security. I refused to carry a revolver. When stopping in a hotel, as we sometimes did, the General had my room guarded throughout the night. I addressed the Auxiliary units throughout the disturbed counties and areas. In Longford I wandered over the homes and haunts of Oliver Goldsmith.

We encountered difficulties. Roads were made impassable, high stone barricades were thrown up, huge trees were felled across our path. I saw the last round-up by the English in Ireland. A regiment of Lancers formed a circle around an area of several square miles. Then they closed in toward a centre, bringing with them all the men and boys within the circle. It was one of the most distressing sights I have ever witnessed. The men were haggard from hunger, they were clad in rags, and there they stood before their armed conquerors, sullen, silent, defiant, ready to suffer death for the things they believed to be right.

At another place I witnessed an incident which was a miniature picture of Irish history. There was a stone barricade across a road. We stopped, of course, and the soldiers spread out over the countryside like a fan. It was a small sort of round-up. The only result was an Irish farmer in shirt and trousers.

" How long has this been here? " asked the General sternly.

" About a month, more or less, yer honor."

" You lie! " said the General. " It 's only been here a few days."

" Whut fur do ye be talkin' like that now? Shure it don't matter to me if it 's been up a year or a day. It 's th' thruth I 'm afther tellin' ye."

Threats of prison, mere bluff on the General's part, did n't move him. He stood there looking bewildered. Then something happened. A little willy-wagtail fluttered from her nest on the top of the barricade. We looked at each other and then at the farmer. We peeped into the nest and found four eggs.

" Well," said a Dublin Castle man, " it must have taken her about a month to lay four eggs, Pat."

" Gad, I 'm thinkin' ye 're about right, yer honor," he said. " She 'd be afther layin' about wan a week."

It was an acted parable, a bird's-nest view of Ireland, the meaning of which was not lost on those who witnessed it. Perhaps I helped a little on this journey. I made men laugh. I made them think. I was detached and disinterested. The General said I put hope into the hearts of his men. My own hope was that their work would soon come to an end.

When I returned to London I wrote an article on my observations in Ireland. It was three thousand words long. The *Evening News* never prints long articles. I told the editor he might take out of it anything he wanted and throw the rest into the waste-paper basket. I was never more astonished in my life than when my name in huge letters covered the billboards of London next day. The article was printed just as I wrote it. It was widely advertised as " the greatest article ever written on Ireland." I asked the editor why. " Well," he said, " you tell the truth; you tell it simply and plainly. You see things in their true proportion; and your comment at the close that ' guns cannot kill the spirit of a people ' is so sane and so unanswerable that reactionary men were moved by it."

All Fleet Street took notice of that article, and several offers of journalistic work of a permanent sort came to me as a result. Perhaps the most important notice of it was taken by churchmen. I was waited upon and asked to elaborate the spiritual implications in it at a mass meeting of churchmen which they would call for that special purpose. At that meeting the present Archbishop of York, Dr. Temple, spoke, and the Bishop of Peterborough took part. My plea was for the recognition of that which is imperishable in the Celtic temperament. It was the single sentence on that point in my article that attracted the attention of spiritually-minded churchmen.

As the guest of Lord and Lady Aberdeen I made a tour of North Britain on behalf of the League of Nations Union. The Aberdeens were of that inner circle of friends I made during those years — friends whose fellowship remains a permanent element in my life. In the city of Aberdeen I gave eight addresses in one day. The *Aberdeen Free Press* said that was a record. The addresses were given to high schools, training schools, the University, the Chamber of Commerce, and a mass meeting in the evening. Of course, it is *what* a man has to say that is important — not the number of times he says it; but the Aberdeen papers bore testimony to the enthusiasm created for the spiritual force behind the League of Nations at Geneva.

A little later I was the guest of Lord and Lady Aberdeen in their Dublin house, and became acquainted with Lady Aberdeen's work for the poor — than which I know of no greater work by a single person in any city of the world.

In the early part of Victoria's reign 33 per cent of the men of England were unable to write their names.

The percentage among women was 49. England has traveled a long distance since Gladstone and Disraeli joined hands to defeat Lord John Russell's proposals for popular education.

One of my last adventures in England was to do some pioneer work in education for Manchester University. The authorities wanted money for extension. I could go to the working class and interest them in the work of an institution which, if it was not directly benefiting them now, would benefit their children.

University bonds were printed and I sold them at a shilling apiece in the large manufacturing plants. This was the first time in the history of England, or perhaps anywhere else, that a university had made such an appeal. The interest I created, perhaps, faded away; but it was a foundation upon which the University could have built an extension course at small expense. This also was a morale-raising. To attract the attention of the rich, however, a dynamic was needed. In the council somebody suggested that a royal visit would serve the purpose. Any member of the Royal Family would do, but they had tried many times to secure such a visit and had always failed.

I asked if His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught would do! The words had hardly escaped my lips when I felt the air cool. I was an American — a little painfully conscious of it just at that moment. The question was not put to the council, a body I had never met with, but to a prominent member, by whom it was sidetracked at once. I was told by a less august personage that they had tried to get the Duke but had failed — as they had failed to get the Prince and others. Being always possessed of a reckless desire to attempt impossibilities, I made the suggestion where it would receive some serious recognition. When all the dignity of high officials had failed, my suggestion seemed a joke. I went off to London, called up the Duke's secretary, and was invited to take tea with the Duke at St. James's Palace.

I suppose there must be an unwritten law as to what men wear when they take tea with royalty. I did n't know what the correct attire was, and if I had known I should have gone as I was anyway, for the simple reason that I had no money to buy clothes for such a purpose. I was royally received, just as I was. After a pleasant half-hour I put the request to him. He said he had refused a year ago. But he told me the reason. His mother, Queen Victoria, had a hatred of trains, and all his life he also had dreaded them. Besides, Manchester was a depressing place and he was getting old. I came back with a personal plea. As a stranger I had given England five years of my life. This was the first time I had asked for a favor — I did n't count the stock collar; that was a necessity. Would he, as a personal favor, make the visit?

" Well, after all," he said, " it 's a small matter, and I don't see how I can refuse you."

" You 'll come? "

" Yes. Tell the Vice Chancellor and the Lord Mayor to visit me here for details."

I took my leave, and as soon as I was out on St. James's Street I wired his acceptance to the University authorities.

XIV

HOME AND TO BED

THEN I turned a corner in my pilgrimage and turned my face toward home. I had given five years. During that time I had been an alien to the people I served and forgotten by my own. I was not a candidate for medals or honors. The Prime Minister wrote me a letter of thanks on behalf of himself and his Government. It was an interesting adventure. I did it because it was the thing to do. My reward is the memories I have and the consciousness that I did what I could.

When I sailed into New York Harbor I was as poor as I had been when I entered as an immigrant. Yet I was rich — rich in experience, rich in service, and a millionaire in pleasant memories. I paid a high price for these riches. I lost my books and pictures. My furniture had faded away. There was no home-coming, because I had no home. I had to begin all over again. Many of my old friends had become prosperous. To many of them the war had meant opportunity — but not of my kind.

I have never carried around letters of introduction or commendation. I have never moved on credentials, certificates, faded clippings, or memorials of what men thought of me. I have never chased jobs. All the jobs I have ever had have chased me. The nearest approach to a deviation from that was when I walked into the Rotary headquarters in Chicago.

" I bring you the greetings of the London Rotary Club," I said to the secretary. " I am a speaker, and should like to address Rotary clubs on a better understanding between Europe and America. Try me out. If you find that I have something more to say than the average speaker, and can say it better, send me on a tour. All I ask is car fare from one place to another."

I was tried out and sent. I covered the big cities East and West. That was carrying on the propaganda of good will, but it was n't getting anywhere toward an economic solution of my difficulties. I began to feel the effects of those whirlwind activities in France and England. Something had gone wrong in a vital part of my digestive apparatus. I tried many doctors and many remedies, but nothing alleviated my excruciating suffering. With this disability I went on a tour for a Chautauqua company and lectured on sixty consecutive days. The work was easy enough, but to lug a bag around and find a new hotel every night sapped my vitality and added to my pain.

Nobody on that Chautauqua circuit knew that I was suffering. Once when I fainted, of course they suspected that I was not a well man; but on the whole I was looked upon as the happiest man of the crowd — and perhaps, despite my sufferings, I was. I had a large repertory of funny stories and I made generous use of them. In a town in Pennsylvania where the preachers were Fundamentalists — and then some — the business men at my lecture thought they would like to hear me preach. I had to spend a Sunday there, so I consented to address a Union meeting in the evening — if the committee in charge of the meeting so desired. The committee had a first-rate scrap in deciding whether I was orthodox or heterodox. I heard all about it and was prepared. I was having tea with a doctor and his family on that Sunday afternoon when two of the committee came along in their faded Prince Alberts to sound me on theology. As soon as the weather preliminaries were over and a committee man opened up on his mission, I broke in: —

" Excuse me, brother," I said; " I heard that you were coming to ask me to preach, and if I had known where you lived I would have saved you the trouble of coming. Personally I am a strict Supralapsarian, and I understand that Infralapsarians are as thick as flies in this community."

" What is an Infra — what do you call it? "

" What, sir? Is it possible that you don't know whether the divine decree of election to damnation or salvation was issued before or after Creation? Well, I *am* surprised! "

" What we want to know — "

" I know what you want to know, but what *I* want to know is whether you are heterodox or orthodox or Burdox. I 'm told you are Fundamentalists, but that is n't enough for me. I go deeper — much deeper. I 'm a Foundationist. I go back for my doctrines to a time when this planet was spinning around in space as a cloud of fire mist!"

I did n't let him get a word in edgewise. Every time he attempted to say something I would spin a yarn of nonsense that would mystify him. Finally they begged me to take part in the meeting, and I said I would pray over it! When it came my turn to address the audience that night, I told my favorite short story: "Where Love is, there is God also."

I was interested in Dr. Percy Stickney Grant's story of his reaction to the war hysteria, and the gradual falling away of his rich parishioners. He told me the story, as he always did, without anger or resentment. His fight for freedom and truth made him the outstanding personality in the American Church of his day. He wondered what would have happened to me if I had not gone to Europe.

"If I had n't gone to France," I said, "I should have gone to jail. I could n't possibly have kept out!"

At a luncheon one day I met one of Mr. Hearst's managers. He became interested in my experience in France and England and asked if I would consider writing for the Hearst papers.

I shared with most of the writers I knew a dislike for Hearst journalism, but I told him I would write for anybody who would print what I wrote — my specialty, if I had any, being human-interest stuff and commentary on the passing show.

He needed a series of ten articles. I wrote them. This, I learned later, was to test my ability to write on a given topic and in a given time. He gave the articles to Mr. Hearst, who read them on his way to California. A wire came immediately to have me put on the editorial page of the *Journal.* I wrote three articles a week. Before I had been writing very long I evolved a new newspaper type of article in "Psalms for the Times," of which the following is an example: —

Psalm of the Scrubwoman

We are the office ghosts, who wander at night through streets
 that reach to the sky.
Our lives are dull, our hopes behind; yet we have a
 Place in the world.
When kings and barons of modern trade
 Have abandoned their thrones for the night,
We scavengers come and remove the dust from the battle
 Fields where souls are slain,
And the rust from tarnished shields.
 We do not know — why should we care? —
Who wins or loses, sinks or swims.
 They do not know that we exist —
We only see their dirt.
And yet, Lord God, all life is one! We do our bit
 Beneath the stars; they do theirs under the sun.
When the long life's day is ended and
 We stand before the throne,
What will it matter, Lord — not very much —
 Which of us owned the office and which the scrubbing brush!

These articles and psalms attracted the attention of young Cornelius Vanderbilt's manager. Vanderbilt had organized a newspaper syndicate and they were looking for writers. The manager called on me and asked if I had a contract with the Hearst newspapers. I had not, and I naturally supposed that if they wanted such a thing they would have asked me to sign one.

" Sign a contract with us," Vanderbilt's manager said, " and we will sell your stuff to the *Journal* and to other papers as well."

I could see nothing objectionable in that; so I signed the contract. They no sooner had my contract than they proceeded to disconnect me from the Hearst papers. I never knew quite how it was done — I never could get any satisfactory explanation from either publisher. The Vanderbilt people held me to that contract for six months, and during that time never placed a single article of mine anywhere. When Vanderbilt's tabloid newspapers were established on the coast and he was at the height of his glory in reforming journalism, I wrote him a letter. I did not ask him to make good his promises; I told him that he had deprived me of a living, but that I had fully and freely forgiven him and wished him good luck in his undertakings.

To this letter he replied, stating that as he would be in my neighborhood soon he would call and talk the matter over. I never heard from him again. If I had had any shrewdness in my make-up I should have straightened the thing out at the start. On the other hand, it may have been the means of saving me from something worse or directing me to something better. In the long run it does n't matter. Nothing lasts.

The man by whose power of mental healing I was enabled to return to France was now established in San Francisco. He wanted me to join him and edit his magazine. Largely in the hope that he could again help me physically, I accepted his invitation. Gratitude for what he had done for me was also a major consideration. As Mr. Vanderbilt had started out to reform journalism, so this man intended to reform the movies — and to make even a small dent in either of these institutions calls for something which neither of these men possessed. Both of them are now seeking other worlds to conquer, while the unconquered ones are doing " business as usual."

This man could gather crowds. He knew the advertising game. He helped people. He made them think. To these crowds he appealed for help in his enterprises — moving-picture production and the establishment in Mexico of an ideal city. He sold stock in both companies. That ideal city was his complex. He believed that in order to establish it he was justified in any methods, businesslike or unbusinesslike, by which he could accomplish his end. I was of a contrary turn of mind. To him the end justified the means. To me the means must be as justifiable as the end. I never owned a dollar's worth of stock in either enterprise, but I helped them both. I wrote a scenario called "The Bowery Bishop," and it made money — for him. With him I interviewed President Calles, immediately after his election, concerning the ideal city. Mr. Calles was impressed and promised to assist. I was not blind to this man's blunders, but I thoroughly believed in his goodness of heart and purity of purpose. I worked for him, fought for him, and sacrificed for him until I was in imminent danger of becoming like him!

I had told him I would give him a year and during that time he could exploit me. I hoped that during that time his power to heal would return and I should get from him what no physician seemed able to give. My health got worse, and the time came when I could no longer explain him, defend him, or do him any good. He later failed financially. His character, estimated at its lowest value, was very much higher than that of many of his severest critics at its highest.

One physician after another diagnosed my condition. I became a case for experimentation. Old schools, new schools, experts and specialists, psychotherapists, Christian Scientists, exponents of New Thought, and a bewildering array of other practitioners of the healing arts passed me through their hands. My sufferings became so severe that I writhed in paroxysms of acute anguish several times both night and day. One day, going along the main street, a man pushed an iron cellar door up and I stepped into the hole, breaking five ribs and crushing the organ that was giving me pain. For months I counted time by the repercussions of pain. Only during a few hours each night was I free from agony. One night I seemed to sense the approach of death. Mustering all the strength I had, I took a pencil and scrawled on a few sheets of paper my " valedictory ": not, perhaps, the thing that would be expected of me. A mood, just a mood, behind which there was a philosophy.

My Friend on the White Horse

So here you are at the end of the trail,
My Friend on the Great White Horse.
A stranger? Oh no; I have met you before —
Aye, many a time,
But mostly in busy scenes
When you took your guests
By the sheaf or load
And led them limping down the road
To the music of the guns.
I have met you before,
Oh, many a time — in the crowded haunts of men
Where you gathered the children and carried them off,
Choked with disease
And killed by the greed of men.
I have seen you trample little flowers
And ride roughshod through a mist of tears
As the wolf of hunger barked at your heels
And helped you gather them in.
I hated you then — forgive me, Friend!
Your damning touch and fetid breath
Froze to death the friends I loved,
And, love being all I had,

I fought your presence everywhere.
But you won — you always won.

It 's different now, since
You 've come for me —
And I answer your call alone:
I see no blood on your horse's hoofs,
I see no scars on your face;
Your breath is as fresh as the odor of flowers
And your hands are as warm as the sun.
Whether your call be timely,
Inopportune, or just, I do not know.
I only know my soul is weary —
Weary of the endless fight;
And I welcome a rest
From the struggle —
I welcome the coming night
That follows the work
Of a long, hard day,
As flowers welcome the light.

Then turn your spectral steed toward
The sunset;
I shall follow where you lead —
Just as I am, without complaining,
Whining, or explaining,
Without apology or fear of consequence.
I played the game.
Are you ready?
Go!

To me by that time there was no death; there was only release to another sphere of life and activity.

The strange feeling of approaching dissolution was the turning point in my condition. I began to gain strength. When comparatively free from pain I began seriously to consider psychotherapy and to apply the power of mind to my physical condition. When able to be about I attended some lectures by Dr. McCollum of Johns Hopkins University. In his first lecture he gave us a simple prescription which has been to me of inestimable value. Every morning for two years I have taken what he called the "isotonic salt solution" — a quart of water, of the same temperature as the blood, with two (level) teaspoonfuls of common salt. This with my attitude of mind gave me a new lease of life. Up to the time I went to France I had always had more than ordinary strength. I had used it recklessly and cared for it negligently.

When I was suffering most acutely from the broken ribs a young lawyer called and offered to institute a suit for damages against the company responsible for the accident. I had never had any dealings with ambulance chasers and considered his call an act of kindness. It was against my principles to take anybody into court. I did not need to, so he said; the company was insured against such accidents and would pay — and so on. I gave my consent and the enterprising lawyer secured for me one thousand dollars. He explained that the usual charge for such legal services was from 30 to 50 per cent of the total. As a special rate to me his partner and he had decided to charge me only the minimum rate. For this benevolent act I was, of course, grateful. When I had paid lawyers, doctors, hospital, and nurse, I had seventy-five dollars left — just fifteen dollars a rib! Probably the lawyer imagined that they were his own ribs that were broken and charged me sixty dollars each.

XV

CRISES ABROAD: ENGLAND AND GERMANY

JOSIAH ROYCE was a Californian. He used to say that " a mouse when tormented and torn to pieces by a cat was realizing *his own deepest will,* since he had subconsciously chosen to be a mouse in a world that should have cats in it."

Consciously or subconsciously, having chosen to reside in a small Californian city, I found some difficulty in applying this cat-and-mouse philosophy to my own case. Whether I preached from a pulpit, lectured from a platform, or taught in a classroom, I found myself disturbing the mental equilibrium of my hearers. Of course, it needed to be disturbed — but woe to the disturber! My knowledge of literature had not been acquired in college classrooms. The subject matter of my preaching was gleaned from life. Kindly and with good humor I tried to make people think. To " stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance " was my motive and only propaganda. If I made a plea for pure English speech before students it was construed as a reflection on teachers. I fell foul of the Fundamentalists. I was an advocate of world peace, and the professional patriots considered me unpatriotic and a Bolshevik because I believed in letting the Russians manage their own affairs.

Dusting off people's little gods is a thankless job. But life is full of compensations: in this exile in California I have made the best friends of my career; and then, it is the most beautiful spot on earth. If I failed to realize that I was realizing " my own deepest will," I took refuge in Royce's larger viewpoint that " all lives are parts of one divine life in which all problems are solved and all evils justified." It has been my habit all through life when one door shut to look around and find another open. Some changes in my life seemed at the moment calamitous. Looking back, I do not remember a single change that was not an improvement — a better opportunity for me to serve my age.

In this famine period I knew where I should have a warm welcome. England was in a crisis. I knew what I could do, just as I knew what I could do in France. The general strike was declared in May 1926. Knowing the temper of the English people, I knew it would fail. I was apprehensive about the aftermath. The crux of the problem was the coal industry. Thousands of miners who knew me in France would welcome me again. I could hold the balance level.

When I arrived in London in June the general strike was a thing of the past, but the miners were out and likely to remain out for a long time. I listened to the debates in Parliament, read all the available literature on the subject, and talked with the parliamentary representatives of the miners.

There was something quite new in this strike. The shopkeeping and professional people of London were angry. They were more angry than they had been during the war. There was some talk during the war about " hanging the Kaiser," but not quite so much as there was about " shooting Cook," the leader, during the strike. The club chair-warmers and chimney-corner philosophers were incensed. Every conversation seemed to begin with " I believe in trade unions, but — "

I went North to the coal fields of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Nottinghamshire. The weather was warm and the men were out of doors, loafing on the streets. It was easy to get an audience. I used to clap my hands and raise my voice for a few sentences. In a minute or two the men of the village stood around, gazing at me, wondering who and what I was.

The average mining village is a wretched place — dull, drab stone cottages which look like a wet day even when the sun is shining on them. There is a deadening monotony of size and color, of parched surfaces, of neglect, and sordidness. Churches and schools are only enlargements of miners' stone cabins. The men look like the houses — shabby, listless.

There is nothing to do and only one thing to think about — the lockout.

In one village I began by saying, " I am not here to preach. I am not a politician, nor a newspaper man. I have nothing to sell. Now will some of you guess — just for the fun of it — what I *am* here for? "

" You 're a ghost," ventured a man. This was an English village. Those men were all Englishmen. Their wives and children were dear to them. They had the same hopes and fears, the same dreams and desires, as other Englishmen all over the land. They were the human stuff upon which the British Empire is built. There were no parasites. Yet they were marooned. In that period of enforced idleness no university thought it worth while to share with them things intellectual; no preacher, lecturer, statesman, traveler, or scientist ventured there to share his store of knowledge. Why? Was it because they were inconvenienced, or angry, or because they never thought of it? These miners were on the edge of starvation; but was there nobody in England who knew that there is food for the mind and soul as well as for the body? I hazard no guess. To me it was inexplicable. The fact was a sad commentary on civilization, on organized religion.

" No," I said to this man, " I am not a ghost. I am an old coal miner, a poor man — as poor as you are. I have come to talk to you about life."

I made them laugh. I tried to inspire them to read.

I made strong appeals for the education of their children. I had written a book on food values. I gave them the essence of it.

When they discovered that I was walking from town to town and getting my food at wayside groceries, they invited me to their homes — some to eat, and some for a night's lodging. The only thing that puzzled them about me was how I could be intelligent and poor. I have not always been able to understand it myself. They were as puzzled about me as I have often been about men who got rich by exploiting the working class.

" I 'd skip that town, son, if I were you," said a miner to me as I started off toward a mining centre about ten miles from Doncaster.

" Why? "

" They 'll beat you up. They 've half killed about a score of policemen, and over fifty of them are in jail for it."

That was interesting. Of course I went. One man overtook me in a Ford car and I rode the rest of the way with him. He wanted to see my Waterloo. Well, they were different in that village. They were angry. They were almost as angry as the men in the Authors' Club in London of which I had been a member for years. But it was far more pleasant to face the miners' anger than the authors'.

Not caring to risk anything, the man let me off at the edge of the village, and I walked into the centre.

To a small group at a public-house door I made known my intention. They were reserved and suspicious. That a man should come there to talk without being paid for it, or without something to put over on them, was incomprehensible to them. I got permission to hold a meeting in the schoolhouse. There were a thousand who wanted to get in. We went into a meadow on the other side of the road.

The majority of the men were communists, and before I opened my mouth in the meadow the leader asked me if I would answer questions. I cleared the decks for action by telling them who I was and what I was there for. " England — yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow " was the topic I announced. I noted the progress made since a time when in those very coal fields little children of five, six, and seven years of age, and sometimes even as young as four, worked alongside their fathers, pulling carts on all fours just like animals. I analyzed the present conditions, as different from the old as Heaven is from Hell. Then I pointed out what I believed to be a pathway of future progress. And I did it all as an old miner. I was in that meadow for three hours. When I left they cheered — and when they cheered I knew that my plea to abstain from violence had succeeded.

One day, trudging along a country road with my little bundle and a stout stick, I was attracted by an old church (one of my hobbies) by the wayside. A notice on the church door told where the keys might be had. It seemed worth while. The sexton, to whom its care was an extra or a side line, came with me. " A goodly number of Americans come here," he informed me on the way, and I wondered why. As soon as I entered the church I knew where I was. It was Scrooby Church, and all unconsciously I found myself in Nottinghamshire. Then, of course, I went across the road and saw the manor house whence came Elder William Brewster to Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts.

" You see them flowers," said the sexton as he pointed to some blossoms in the graveyard. " They are Mayflowers, and that 's where the name of the ship came from."

In the vestibule I turned over the leaves of the visitors' books, and I laughed as I noticed the names of men who had opposed me in New Haven. I wrote my name beneath theirs and added *Pax vobiscum.* Their ancestors came over in the Mayflower. Mine took their first sea voyage in the Ark.

It was a unique experience to have in every town and village in the coal regions a ready-to-hand audience. Sometimes after talking for an hour and gaining the good will of the miners I sent them home for their children. With them I sat on the dry ground and told fairy stories. Once, in Yorkshire, I came across a model mining village. What an amazing thing! To find a place where miners live like human beings! Their cottages were sanitary. They were built around a common, and every cottage had a garden, and the village was far enough away from the mines for flowers to grow.

There was a recreation centre, a library, and a chapel for common gatherings of the community. The men had a fine clubhouse with extensive grounds. There were ten thousand men in the mining district, and only a half-dozen of them belonged to the parish church. One of the Union officials put his small car at my disposal and I was enabled to cover twice as many villages as I could have done on foot.

Once in France after I had finished an address to a thousand men in a hut the order was given for the men to dismiss and march out. Not a man moved. A general sat beside me on the platform. He had never heard a command given that was not on the instant obeyed. Some strange unmilitary influence held them. I begged leave to speak again, and said to the men: " You have something to say to me? Please say it." There was a deathly stillness for a moment.

" Will you come back and talk to us about religion, sir? " said a private, rising to his feet.

" Gladly! " I said, and the men exploded in thunderous applause.

Here in the mining region I found that no matter what I talked about the effect was the same. Life was hard and they were suffering, and when they met a man they believed in they wanted to pump him dry on the issues of life which were deeper than strikes and lockouts.

One Sunday night a thousand miners, with a sprinkling of women and children, filled the largest hall in the community. I had promised to return and give them an address on religion. I asked them to get the vicar of the parish to preside. He was a fine fellow suffering from an indifference he did not deserve. I was a passing show. He was a fixture. And if I could make a closer connection between him and the miners the effect would be better than a sermon.

Evidently these men were unaccustomed either to churches or to sermons. They sat with their caps on, and more than half of them were smoking. Taking as a text the words, " The kingdom of God is within you," I began a five-minute talk on the uses of the imagination — in art, literature, religion, and life — in the life of a miner. Simple suggestions as to how we could use our minds in producing spiritual results followed. It was a new pathway, but they followed me intelligently. I was sure of that. At the close of a twenty-minute talk I said: " Now we are going to put some of that into immediate practice. I want everybody in the hall to close his eyes. We are going to have prayer." There was silence. Behind them was the main entrance. " I see Christ himself coming into the hall," I began, and instantly all caps came off and pipes and cigarettes were removed from their mouths. " He comes slowly down the centre aisle.

He knows every man as He passes. Mentally reach your hands out to Him. What is your chief need? Tell Him." Slowly I traced the footsteps of the Christ around the aisles and passageways. Then I addressed Him in words which would lead men's thoughts. I had never done such a thing before. I have never done it since. It was a thought for the moment, the occasion. The vicar pronounced the benediction and the meeting was over.

"That is the strangest thing I have ever experienced," the vicar said. "Now tell me! How much of your power over men is due to your personality and how much to the thought you express?"

"I don't know, brother. What does it matter?"

There were several sore spots in the mining regions — that is, spots where under special provocation men became angry and violent. But on the whole the miners maintained the English tradition of balance far better than the city folk with whom I was in constant contact. Just like the Tommies in France, the miners were full of good humor. The situation was grim and desperate, but they were more fond of telling funny incidents than they were of stressing their grievances. Here is one of a sheaf of stories.

The mine owners permitted the miners to extract from the "tip" (which is the great culm dump) any crumbs of coal they could find. This privilege had to be guarded by rules which all were bound to obey. An elderly woman, disregarding the rules, had clawed out of the heap a bucket of coal. The miners on guard told her she must put the coal back; she had violated the rules and no exceptions could possibly be made. Her arguments availed nothing. She was reluctant. They left her to her conscience. She went around the big culm heap out of sight. When she reappeared she was swinging an empty bucket. She was stopped, however.

" What did you do with that bucket of coal? " they asked. Seeing they were examining her person closely, she made her last stand.

" It 's in my knickers," she said, " and if ye touch me it 's an *assault!"*

In their desperate need for coal the miners dug up old roads, fingered over mountains of culm, and hoarded as if it were a diamond every particle of coal they could find. Once I came across the men of a village picking the " tip " with feverish fingers, and near the dump there were about a hundred children singing hymns, and one of the hymns they sang began: —

There is a happy land
Far, far away,
Where saints in glory stand,
Bright, bright as day.

There were unmistakable signs that I had spent my force. I returned to London and one day collapsed suddenly on the street. I took a lodging in a mean street over near Shepherd's Bush. The room had a fireplace, but coal was rationed and very expensive. The cold, poor food together with inertia produced a feeling of misery which was difficult to overcome. Psychotherapy did n't seem to work. My imagination was going on one cylinder. I just could n't imagine the room warm when the very marrow in my bones seemed frozen. Somehow good friends found me out and I was moved to more comfortable quarters. A specialist in light therapy gave me relief, and in a few weeks I was down the Rhine addressing the British troops.

I took a week to cover the ground that I used to cover in a day in France. There was no hurry now, and to address one or two crowds a day seemed like a vacation. When my work with the soldiers was finished I visited the great industrial centres between Wiesbaden and Berlin, gathering material for a series of articles for English papers. In addition to that, I availed myself of the opportunity to visit all the great German art centres — something I had longed to do for more than half my life. Germany amazed me. The discovery of the German people was to me a revelation. I went there with some of the old war-time propaganda—the old lies—still lingering in the back of my mind. I came away convinced that Britain and America had much to learn from their conquered enemies.

My first surprise was the cleanliness of the cities. The Germans keep their streets as clean as their floors.

They do not litter public places with all sorts of refuse. Berlin is overcrowded, but slums, as we know them in American and British cities, do not exist. German children do not sell newspapers. No army of street mendicants parade the thoroughfares. In London wounded soldiers not infrequently display their wounds in public to attract sympathy. It is not done in Germany. The poorest of the poor are clean, neat, and tidy. The wretched sordidness of the poor as we know it in New York, London, and Dublin is nonexistent.

The modern newspapers, English and American, keep us fairly well informed about the German Government and what they are doing or not doing; but concerning the life of the people they have little to say. I interviewed all sorts of people from one end of Germany to the other—high and low, laborers, professors, statesmen, and shopkeepers. All Germany had one complaint in common: France did exactly what Germany knew she would do; she sent a larger standing army into Germany than Britain had when the war began. The loss of the colonies, the Treaty of Versailles, the Danzig Corridor, and Reparations were all as they expected. The complaint the Germans held in common was concerned with none of these. It was that the civilized world believed that they started the war. We all believed that. We are revising our opinions, since in our civilized peace lies are not cutting quite the figure they cut in war.

" I am a self-appointed peace envoy," I said. " I came to see how you were facing your problems, and to the limit of my ability will spread abroad the truth."

I mildly suggested to many people that Germany had won the war. Her territory was unravaged. Her autocracy was ended, her army and navy gone, and gone with them the swank and swagger that had given her a bad name among her neighbors. On the other hand, the conquerors were reduced to poverty — all except the United States, and we were clamoring for a big army and a big navy, and patriots were parading the streets demanding a bonus. The test of victory is the use one makes of it, and we had made a bad use of it and were rapidly turning it into defeat.

In Berlin I was tendered a luncheon by Prince and Princess Lichnowsky. The Prince was German Ambassador in London when the war broke out. At this luncheon there were Foreign Office officials, literary men, and members of the Diplomatic Corps. The Prince was the only German official who had the courage to warn the German Government that they were " headed for the abyss." As a result he was not in favor during the war, nor after. The Prince and Lloyd George were the two most brilliant men I met in Europe.

An eminent British journalist had just written a series of articles charging Germany with bad faith. I wanted to find out the German reaction to this attack. In the Bureau of Information an official produced all the articles. No German newspaper had taken any notice of them. The Government would not reply. " But," said an official, " the Government will be under obligation to you if when you have fully looked into the facts you feel like answering them."

Seven members of the Reichstag gave me a luncheon in the Hotel Adlon. A two-hour discussion of German affairs followed. " I am tremendously impressed by what I see and feel in Germany," I said to these men, who represented all sorts of political opinion, " but what puzzles me is the murder of Walter Rathenau and Maximilian Harden. To us outsiders, Rathenau spoke with a clear voice for all Germany. Harden was Germany's keenest critic. Why were they murdered? "

Evidently neither of the murdered men had any warm friends in that group. The answers were very lame and evasive, and as I was not there to argue I did not press them. There was no reserve on anything else. They opened all doors leading to information.

The most hopeful thing that I discovered in Germany was the German Youth Movement. It had been in existence for twenty-five years, yet I had never read a word about it in American newspapers or magazines. When I returned to London I went to the British Museum reading room and found that in a quarter of a century only three notices of it had appeared in England.

Around a camp fire some boys were talking about life. They were unanimous in the opinion that natural youthfulness was suppressed in great measure by an unnatural parental authority at home, an overbearing authority in the school, and an unreasonable authority in the church. In revolt they found stiff opposition. That bound them closer together. Their numbers increased. They went to the lakesides and wooded places on Sundays. They called themselves *die Wandervögel,* " the wandering birds." In a few years there were thousands of them. Girls soon followed suit. In summer time they formed bands and took long journeys, singing old folk songs and dancing the folk dances of centuries ago. Villages and towns were asked to entertain them en route.

In the home, school, and church they demanded freedom. It took ten years to secure recognition. By that time they had formed week-end villages, self-governing and self-supporting. Then a Swiss minister wrote a pamphlet in which he asked the Wandervögel where they were going? They discussed the pamphlet in camps to good purpose. " We are in search of the truth," they said, " and the first truth is how to live natural, wholesome, healthy lives." Beer-drinking was a national habit. They discussed it and arrived at the decision that it was a bad habit, and gave it up. Cigarettes went the same way. So did the eating of flesh. They made a clean sweep of all stimulants, narcotics, and what in their opinion were unhealthy foods.

When Germany was hard pushed in the last year of the war, German leaders conceived the idea of using the Wandervögel as a war force. The psychology of suggestion was put to work. A convention was called and a speech put into the mouth of one of them. He had only spoken half a dozen sentences before the convention saw through it.

" We do not belong to your world," said a boy the moment the speaker sat down, " and we will not sacrifice ourselves for your sins."

What they were striving for now was an international understanding, and there were at that time two millions of them.

These Wandervögel can be recognized on the streets. They wear plus-fours, a wide Byronic collar, and no hat.

I was invited to attend " Wandervögel Night " in Berlin University. That such a thing could occur was sufficient evidence that the Wandervögel had arrived. " It seems to me a religion," I said to one of the leaders.

" No," he said, " we don't call it that; but we seek the truth and are determined to live by the spirit."

My articles on Germany were published in London and widely copied throughout the British Isles. The privilege of speaking a strong word in a large way for the Germans gave me a thrill that reacted on my weakened vitality with more benefit than an army of physicians.

XVI

PEREGRINATIONS

TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, London, — just a block or two of it, — is a book antiquarian's paradise. It is the Piccadilly Circus of the secondhand-book world. I have been collecting editions of *The Vicar of Wakefield* for years, and used to prowl around those old shops as a prospector hunts for gold. One day I met a cadaverous-looking man in clerical garb. I had met him a score of times in those haunts, but this time I had an impulse to speak.

" It 's worse than drunkenness! " I exclaimed, as we ran into each other at the end of a book stack.

" It really *is* drunkenness, you know," he said. " I 've taken the blooming pledge a dozen times, but here I am! "

" What 's your specialty? "

" Well, I fancy you 'll think it a curious hobby for a person such as I am, but I 've been collecting editions of *Alice in Wonderland* for some years."

" I know where there 's a second edition with an autographed letter of the author's."

" In Dorman's? "

" Yes."

" I 've seen it. Indeed, I see it every week, but —

well, of course, it 's worth the price, and if not snapped up by some bally American before my father dies — well — ha, ha! — you know — I 'll jolly well have it."

Two weeks later I met him in another shop.

"How 's your father?" I asked, hopefully. He laughed and apologized for his former levity. His father was ridiculously healthy.

"Why don't you marry a rich widow?" I asked smilingly.

Then he laughed — it was a gurgle that shook his thin frame. "I did that when I began collecting," he said; "not rich, but — well, moderately well off, you know. But hang it all, one cawn't keep on marrying widows to collect *Alice* — can one?"

"Not for *Alice in Wonderland*," I said, "but for a first edition of the *Vicar* — well, in that case the end might justify the means."

The picture auction is another of my obsessions. This also is a species of intoxication. A picture auction is to me an æsthetic jamboree. I seldom buy anything, because I seldom have any money, but I enjoy the examination before the sale. I like to know who buy and what they pay. In the Church of the Ascension we had an old bachelor who was rich and miserly. In the church I gave a talk on Millet one night. This old man told me of a Millet painting he had bought in Paris many years ago. He did n't invite me to have a look at it. Eight years after I left the Ascension Church I went into an auction room on University Place to see his Louis XIV furniture sold. He had given his furniture and pictures to his housekeeper, and there was the Millet! There being no picture dealers present, it was knocked down to me at a ridiculously low figure.

In London I had several windfalls of a similar character — covering wide distances of time, of course. No miner ever got more joy out of the discovery of gold than I have out of suddenly finding myself in possession of a sketch by Turner, a water color by Copley Fielding, a Constable, a Creswick, and a Nasmyth — all of them auction accidents. Sometimes the auctions themselves came into my experience as accidents. I was going down Arlington Street, London, on November 24, 1926, when I saw a large crowd at the door of No. 20. I went up the steps to inquire what was going on, when the doors suddenly opened and I was swept in with the crowd. I found myself in one of the greatest picture sales of all time. That was the sale at which " Pinkie " was knocked down for $388,500. This was the Michelham Collection sale. Picture prices went to dizzy heights in that sale, and some canvases by great masters sold for less money than it cost to frame them. Perfectly conscious that years would elapse before I should again enjoy these art galleries, rare book and picture shops, and auctions, I took full advantage of my stay in London.

I wanted to visit Russia, and applied for a visa. I waited months for it, and then applied again for it in Berlin. I did not get it. When I was leaving London for home I discovered that it had been in the London Soviet office all the time. It had just got into the wrong pigeonhole.

On the way to Geneva I stopped for a week in Paris. For a few years I had heard and read much about *Ulysses,* by James Joyce. Probably no book has been so cursed and blessed for generations. In England and the United States it is bootlegged at twenty-five dollars a copy. I secured one for one hundred francs. The revolutionary change in the English language did not faze me. The book is unique — a wide departure in style from anything ancient or modern. There are over seven hundred pages. I read one hundred and gave it up. It gave me an impression that he had written it standing on his head in an outhouse! Rabelais is a guffaw. Joyce is an effluvium.

Geneva is more truly a state of mind than Boston ever was. It is a Calvinistic state of mind, and its human side gets on the nerves of men who come there to do the world's business. Upon seeing it, surrounded by the snow-capped mountains, with the lake at its side, and with the River Rhone dashing through its streets, one's mind unfolds in deep admiration. The statues of Calvin and his fellow theologians look like Rameses or Tutankhamen. A bronze statue of Jean Jacques Rousseau is there too, but they have put him on a little island all by himself.

There is only one secondhand-book shop, — with meagre stock, — but in the little crooked streets one comes across the choicest collections of wrought-iron antiques in Europe.

While in Geneva I was the guest of Mrs. Whyte of Edinburgh — widow of Dr. Alexander Whyte, who was a good friend of mine. Mrs. Whyte is the most intelligent woman I met in Europe — and a saint. I shall always be grateful for her kindness.

I had lived in the same house in London with Dr. Nitobe, author of *Bushido* and secretary of the Japanese delegation at Geneva. He was surrounded by the retinue of a prince. When my name was presented to him he came out of his office at once and greeted me. When we broke the gentlemen's agreement with Japan I wrote a poem in blank verse entitled "Be Patient, Neighbor Japan." A copy reached Nitobe, and he had it reprinted. The first thing he did when he led me into his inner office was to show me how he had used it. From that hour I became the special guest of the whole Japanese delegation.

The Committee on Intellectual Coöperation was in session. No visitors were ever allowed except by the unanimous consent of the Committee. The leading people on the committee were Einstein, of relativity fame, Madame Curie, Sir Jagadis Bose, the famous Hindu scientist, and Sir Gilbert Murray.

"I have a high honor for you," Dr. Nitobe said one morning. " I have a personal invitation from every member of the Committee for you to sit with us to-day."

It was an interesting session. I was introduced to all of the members. Most of them I met later at a dinner given in my honor. I was there primarily to do for the executive force of the League what I had done for the officers and men in France, but in a different way, of course. Their work was arduous, exacting, and confining; and Geneva was the poorest of poor intellectual playgrounds. There was nothing to do, nothing to see. Executives got fed up. I was given the freedom of every national office, and specialists were detailed to make me acquainted with the whole machinery of the League. I had always favored the League, even as a gesture. Now the evidence of its work was before me and I became an enthusiast. After a few weeks in Geneva I was urged to take residence in the city and conduct Sunday afternoon meetings for the little army of officials, clerks, and the crowds of visitors passing through. I could not see my way clear to do that at the time, but I have never wholly relinquished the idea.

Once again I began to fold my tent and betake myself to sunnier skies. I went to Antrim to visit my sister and wander over the scenes of my childhood for the last time. This pilgrimage began there, and there for the time being the record must come to a close.

I stayed with my friend Canon Collis, the vicar of the parish, saint, scholar, and gentleman, who has given his life to this small town.

" Mary, dear," I said to my sister one day, " let us go to Belfast and just wander about as we used to do when we were children. Nobody will know us, and we can look at the beautiful things in the shop windows to our heart's content. We will take the bus and pretend that it is our private car. We will give rides to everybody going in our direction."

So off we went — pretending. In our peregrinations we were " jist lettin' on " that we were poor. I hoped to inveigle my sister into a first-class restaurant for luncheon, but there her imagination ceased to function. " Come," I said, " let 's pretend that we are real quality in disguise, trying to see how many will tread on the tails of our coats." She was obdurate, clothes-conscious and afraid. But we had a wonderful day together, owning everything by the same processes by which we used to satisfy the gnawings of hunger with fairy stories.

About eight o'clock in the evening we were searching for our " private car " when we heard the sounds of a brass band. A long procession came along with several brass bands and banners flying. Of course, I suggested at once that all this was in our honor.

" Our chauffeur is having a cup of tea in a pub, my dear," I said, " and while he enjoys himself we will follow this crowd "; for a temperance procession in

Ireland is as rare as hen's toothache or holy water in an Orange lodge.

No, she had never been at a meeting and — well, she would n't. Our bus went lumbering along the highway toward Antrim. We were about five miles from Belfast when we were stopped. A man came in and called my name. I answered. Would I come out on the road?

" The Sinn Feiners, Mary," I said. " You 'd better go on home. This may be a call to where we won't need any clothes! "

Three thousand temperance workers in a large hall. A famous speaker from London had disappointed them at the last moment. Policemen had been searching Belfast for me all day, and Antrim had been scoured and fine-combed. Would I return and make the speech? Yes, of course — if Mary would accompany me. Mary came, but when she looked in the door and saw a sea of faces she nearly had a fit. She balked, and I tried a little firmness.

" Look here," I said to the committee, " my sister has never heard me talk above a whisper. I will not open my mouth until I see her inside. Get five policemen and carry her in! "

Mary became discreet as she listened to this dictum. When I saw her in a seat I smiled at her and was happy.

" Thank God he did n't turn up! " was the committee's comment on the disappointment, and I leave it at that. Belfast had discovered me. Being human, I was pleased by the plaudits of the people; but the real inner joy that I had out of the experience came when Mary herself discovered that behind our childish pretending there was something real for a real world.

Later I addressed several large crowds in halls and churches in the city. My farewell address to Ireland was in the old parish church where I had been baptized and confirmed. It was to me more memorable, more intimately sacred, than any other meeting. Only once before had the church been so crowded, and that was in war time when a regiment was leaving for France. After two hundred more than the seating capacity had been squeezed in, there remained outside the church door a crowd for whom no room could possibly be made, and in that crowd stood my sister, who had looked after somebody's " wains " until it was too late to get in.

In the pulpit I was two distinct persons. I gave an orderly discourse, and while giving it my mind went back over the long years. I saw myself a ragged boy in a potato field; selling papers on the streets; sitting under yonder gallery in the poverty pews, a thing of shreds and patches. I was by the bright winter fire listening to my mother's stories. And then I saw myself kneeling at the rail over which I was now bending. Many of the people in front of me were listening, but their minds were also wandering, and the feeling produced was one of ineffable tenderness.

Before I left, a movement was inaugurated by Sir William Whitla to erect a memorial over the unmarked grave of my mother and father. The last phrase in *My Lady of the Chimney Corner* reads: —

" I want to go back there some day and cover them with a slab of marble on which their names will be cut and these words: ' Love is enough.' "

On a rainy day in October 1927 a small group of friends stood around the humble memorial while the vicar offered a dedicatory prayer and my sister laid on it a chaplet of flowers.

XVII

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

I HAVE often speculated on the possibilities of a larger intelligence measured by floor space. If the floor space of our cabin had been thirty-six by forty feet instead of twenty-five by thirty, our chances would have been at least 25 per cent greater. Except when we were packed closely around the fire, there really was n't room for us, so we lived largely on the streets, and consequently much of my elementary education came from the academy of the gutters. From what I learned there I used to think my mother had " quare " notions. My early ideas of God were crude. He was the old man in the skies who watched over us like an eagle-eyed policeman, punishing us for our sins and rewarding us for goodness, when we had any. Many a night when we all went to bed without supper I secretly accused myself of angering God and thus depriving the whole family of food. Heaven was a city whose streets were paved with gold. People went there when they died and were given harps and crowns. The scheme of redemption, as presented to my childish mind, was summed up in the lines: —

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

Some years in Sunday school after I was fourteen made little change in these ideas. Before I could read I could reel off about three hundred texts of Scripture. If I could have repeated the entire Bible in the same way my soul would have been none the better for the performance.

My first clean break with the established order occurred when I attached myself to a small group on board ship called Plymouth Brethren. Their theological plan was like a chest of drawers, each drawer correctly labeled. Those who could read the labels and understand the contents were the saved and those who could n't were the damned. Spurgeon once described a Plymouth Brother as a man who toted a tadpole around town trying to make people believe it was an elephant. A few of the precious doctrines I acquired at this period were: eternal punishment, a personal Devil, a literal Hell, the inerrancy of Scripture, and the imminent end of the world, at which juncture our small group would be caught up *first* and live in glory, while Satan was turned loose for a thousand years. I never wholly enjoyed this guarantee of immunity. I was quite sure I would rather be left behind. It would be more interesting. It was n't an increase of knowledge that saved me from this camp; it was a sense of humor.

It might naturally be imagined that in my quiet evangelism among men I should make use of the theology that possessed me for the moment. Such was not the case. My efforts were to save men, not from Hell, but from themselves. I knew their lives and knew what they needed to be saved from.

Twice I had come into personal contact with Henry Drummond — once when I was an illiterate miner, and again when I was in soldier's uniform. He had inspired me on both occasions. When able to read I found his printed addresses tremendously stimulating. They moved me out of a quagmire into wide open spaces where I could breathe more easily and catch glimpses of the sky.

In a secondhand-book shop I found an old eighteenth-century copy of *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.* To me, at that stage of the evolution of my spiritual consciousness, it seemed a very wonderful book. For some years I read it on my knees every morning. If a mystic be one who believes himself to be the recipient of direct divine illumination, perhaps I might at this period have been so classified. But it was something of an anomaly for a mystic to be imbued with a social consciousness and to be found actively participating in the Labor movement, as I was.

I was a worshiper of the Book. I should have resented such an imputation at the time, but as I look back and analyze my attitude I am quite sure that I was, consciously or unconsciously, a bibliolater. The first shock that came to me as such came from a Jewish rabbi under whom I was studying Hebrew. In the eighth Psalm the psalmist says: "Thou hast made him a little lower than God." The translators of the King James Version took liberties with the text and translated the word *Elohim* "angels"; a small thing, whatever the motive may have been. That led me to a study of versions and texts. I discovered that the same thing was true of the New Testament. The writers of the Gospels were not historians merely; they were interpreters of the records.

Four years at Yale, majoring in theology, were a period of spiritual and intellectual liberation. Anthropomorphism vanished. My conception of God changed. He became to me, not the finite, incompetent deity of the new literati, but, in the words of Ritschl, "Loving Will," or Divine Immanence, whose chief expression and interpreter was Jesus of Nazareth.

The study of Church history under Professor G. P. Fisher shook my faith in the Church as a divine institution. The story of the Church is smeared with blood, reeks with cruelty and persecution. If I could have counted this also as part of a divine plan, as Hegel did, I should have rid my mind at once of all loyalty to the Planner. My own experience was sufficient to convince me that were it not for the restraining hand of the State similar barbarism would be as rife to-day as it was in the Middle Ages.

I had felt for years the need of a Life of Christ for working people. I marveled that no great literary man of the Anglo-Saxon race had ever attempted such a book. All Lives of Christ had been written by theologians, and were dull, heavy, and unattractive — to say nothing at all of the prohibitive price. I have never classified myself as a literary man. I have never seriously settled down to devote my time to the writing of books. Whatever I have written came to me as something demanding expression. But I believed that I could write a Life of Christ which would supply a need in a way that no other such book had ever done. I think Renan's *Vie de Jésus* is the most charmingly beautiful thing ever written on that subject. What was needed, however, was not a charm of style, but a charm of simplicity, which could be appreciated by common people. Furthermore, the central figure in Renan's book is not the Christ I know.

When I began the work I found it to be a far larger undertaking than I had contemplated. It was not complete until after the war, as I have said elsewhere. But the study of the New Testament in a more critical mood than any in which I had ever approached it before led to a spiritual consciousness which is greater, more illuminating, more inspiring, and more satisfactory than anything I have ever known.

I formed the habit of reading a Gospel at a sitting. This manner of reading produced some unlooked-for results. Part of my theological study had been a study of the Synoptic Gospels; but only in reading for personal spiritual understanding did I ever get much out of them. Now I noticed that on the lips of Jesus continually there was a magic phrase that I had used thousands of times without understanding it.

But in reading the four Gospels in succession I saw differences I had never noticed before. The phrase which seemed to be the key to everything that Jesus ever taught was " the Kingdom of God."

It was amazing to me to find the author of the Fourth Gospel recording the use of the phrase by Jesus only four or five times. According to Matthew, He used it fifty-four times; and Luke records the use of it forty-five times. In all of Paul's epistles the phrase is used only about a dozen times.

Something must have happened between the writing of the Synoptic Gospels and the writing of the Fourth. Paul seems to have known little about Jesus anyway. He makes but one solitary quotation from Jesus, and that of a commonplace character. This led me to the theological libraries. What had the theologians to say about this? Ninety-nine per cent of them had nothing of any practical import to say. They were all supremely concerned with Paul and

Paul's intricate network of ambiguous casuistry. It seems almost unbelievable that a phrase used by Jesus, a phrase He illuminated and illustrated by every story He ever told, should be set at naught by His immediate followers. German thinkers from Kant to Ritschl had seen in the Kingdom idea more than Paul saw. Ritschl particularly. He found in it a convenient frame for his picture of man's fellowship in God; but like a policeman he stands at the door of the Kingdom and demands credentials, which Jesus never did. Harnack, in his examination of the elements of historic Christianity, gives definition to the Kingdom idea: "The Kingdom has a triple meaning. First, it is supernatural, a gift from above, not a product of the ordinary life. Secondly, it is a purely religious blessing, the inner link with the living God. Thirdly, *it is the most important experience that a man can have;* that on which everything else depends."

Harnack's interpretation of "the Kingdom" as Jesus preached it made little, if any, impression on the Church. Paul's legal system of theology has always passed muster as Christian. The religious leaders preferred it — it gave them something to fight about.

The difference between the old Jewish economy with its sacrifices, rituals, offerings, and priests, and the newer Jewish system of Paul with its blood atonement, its creeds, rituals, and priests, is very small. I think where the old system made one pharisee the new makes ten.

I never engaged in theological controversy. In religion people are always moved by emotion — never by reason. In the control of crowds I could have made as many converts by taking as a text " A stitch in time saves nine " as by preaching on the most profound statement in the Bible.

" The Kingdom of God is within you " came to me as a revelation. After meditating on the statement, I began a process — a spiritual process — by which I would test the truth of it. It is commonplace in psychology that our nervous system grows to the modes in which it is exercised. Every morning and every evening I sat quietly, body relaxed, mind clear, and heart expectant. Slowly and calmly I repeated twenty times, " The Kingdom of God is within *me.*" Every time I repeated it I stressed a little some particular word. When I had been exercising my heart and mind in this way for some months I began to understand. " For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." The Kingdom of God meant, in the first place, the regnancy of God in the seat of the affections.

Many strange and unusual things developed in those spiritual exercises. Without the usual use of the will in such conflicts, the desires of the flesh were modified and some eliminated. They seemed to have become atrophied by a new consciousness. Some semblance of psychic power developed, but I had no desire for such power. I was in pursuit of happiness, and psychic power seemed a bypath full of danger. Nor did I permit myself to be led into a groove when I discovered that I had power to render psychical aid in cases of nervous disorders. I steadily kept the goal in front of me, and the goal was *God-consciousness.*

It was more interesting than helpful to study the attitude of German philosophers and theologians toward the idea of the Kingdom. Harnack alone gives it as the *summum bonum* of the Gospels. Some of them use it as a convenient phrase, others as a point of departure. Says Ritschl: " The moral perfection of man in the Kingdom of God must be regarded as God's final end in the world." Then why not simplify it, beat a pathway to it, and take away all the impedimenta which mystify the common mind concerning it?

To return from profundities, pantologies, and theologies to the simple words of Jesus was like coming out of a dense jungle into a beautiful summer garden. " The Kingdom of God is within me," I kept thinking and saying, until the words seemed to become brain and tissue and nerve ends. All systems of theology faded away. They became meaningless to me. Race prejudice, class-consciousness, propaganda, resentment to evil, impatience with ignorance and corruption, became illusions to be conquered and extirpated. I do not say that I have attained. I do say that I am on the way. The degree of God-consciousness attained, though small when compared with my needs and desires, is yet very powerful in relegating to a limbo of innocuousness many things which used to seem to me essential and fundamental.

I have always had an idea that a faint glimmer of cosmic consciousness came to me when a boy. My new conception of the Kingdom, among many other things, gave me some sort of world-consciousness which is to me unmistakable. All lines of demarcation between nations and races disappeared. Patriotism in the ordinary sense of the word becomes to me inimical to the concept of the Kingdom. I owe allegiance to the tribe or nation which needs me most. I am a citizen of the world and a brother to all mankind.

The philosophy of the Kingdom gives me an intense desire to serve. I belong to no secret societies, no luncheon clubs. I serve them all. I refuse none. I serve churches when I am asked, but I have no desire ever again to attach myself to one. I look upon the Church as being divine just in proportion as there are divine lives within its membership. In the churches I have found the holiest of men and the saintliest of women; but the Church as a whole is constantly recrucifying the Christ by cowardice, hypocrisy, and a subtle species of slander by which the people paralyze the work of the leaders and destroy each other. The most unconscionable hypocrites I have ever known were controllers of churches. It is long years since the Church sold her spiritual revelation to the captains and generals of a ruthless economic process. She has never recovered, and until she is willing to be poor and find in the words of Christ alone a complete Gospel she never will. So long as organized religion prostrates itself before wealth for a physical existence, so long will it be visionless and without the life of the spirit. To-day we have plenty of rhetoric, oratory, cheeseparing, and philanthropy, but there is no clarion call to repentance, no daring adventures to extend the frontiers of religious thought.

Looking back over half a century of church membership, I can recall vividly the few lives that impressed me as being patterned after the life of Christ. I cannot recall ever having heard anybody say that the Church was Christian.

" A new commandment I give unto you," Christ said, " that ye love one another." That might be considered the irreducible minimum of the Christian religion. Of all the shortcomings of the churches, the violation of this gentle command is the most common. No other group of people are so prone to tear to tatters each other's characters. A special kind of religious goodness seems to have an innate capacity for pharisaism.

"If . . . thy brother hath aught against thee," Christ advises or commands a conference. There may be misunderstanding, which a face-to-face talk would clear away. This gentle command is also ignored. His commands not to resist evil, not to lay up treasures upon earth, and to love our enemies, I believe to be vital to His Gospel, but I pass them over without comment. They have been so battered out of Christian consciousness as to seem quite foolish. But it would seem that there might be found in the churches people who would take a chance on the wisdom of Jesus and *forgive debts.* I have never found any such people.

Christ advised His followers to render certain legal processes unnecessary by giving more than was demanded. He asked them to refrain from pronouncing judgment upon each other. "When thou makest a feast, call the poor," He said, and He gave His reasons for this command. Some of these commands are revolutionary, and others are very simple and demand only courtesy, kindness, and generosity. The Church ignores them all. The golden rule is as well observed outside the Church as it is within. If I were asked to sum up in a sentence the cardinal failure of the Church, I should say it consisted of a twofold disloyalty — first, to Christ; and second, to itself. A church which would take seriously one tenth of the commands of Jesus would be unique in history. It would be the sensation of the age.

A year ago I met the most interesting personality I have ever known. They used to call Mazzini "the

Christ of the nineteenth century," and there are hundreds of thousands of people all over the world who look upon Krishnamurti as a Buddha or Christ of the present age. The moment he opened his door and led me to his sitting room in Arya Vihara in the Ojai Valley I knew I was in the presence of a wonderful soul. He is a Hindu, handsome in person and with a wonderful voice, and when he talks one feels that the ages are speaking. He has separated himself from all sects, all creeds. Summed up in a phrase, his gospel is: "The Kingdom of Happiness is within." I had read his books. At the close of our talk I asked him one question: "What is the difference between your doctrine — if doctrine it may be called — and the secret of Jesus expressed in the words, 'The Kingdom of God is within you'?" He answered, "None."

XVIII

THE PASSION FOR TRUTH

MEN on the side-lines, spectators of the Great War, might escape with faith unimpaired; but those actively engaged in the hellish business could hardly avoid losing faith in some cherished beliefs and traditions. I lost all faith in organized religion. The Church caved in hopelessly, so it seemed to me and to millions of others. But my faith in the efficiency of Christ's way to life suffered no violence.

Despite the physical handicap and the thoughts that impinge on the mind when a man is nearer seventy than sixty, I started out again in the spirit of youth to find the lost radiance that was mine in the dawn of intelligent life. I wondered as I started whether in the realm of things spiritual, as in the earlier stages of romantic love, the afflatus was an ephemeral thing. Love comes with the turbulence of water dashing over the rocks, with noise and power. Then it loses itself in the broad deep river and moves in silent power toward the sea. It is the same water, in deeper, broader, and more quiet form.

The analogy was not satisfactory. The source of spiritual joy is an eternal thing. The human heart yearns for it from the cradle to the grave. This growing God-consciousness gave my soul rest in large measure; but my soul was not satisfied with rest. It kept striving for joy. Never had my mental faculties been so active and alert. Millions had been on such pilgrimages before me. The poets, philosophers, and novelists had left records of their strivings and findings. I went to the philosophers. Their books were piled up like mountains. One lifetime was not enough in which to read them. I must select the masters and ask them the eternal questions.

Among these Hegel held me. I was charmed with his witchery of words as much as by his guess at the riddle of existence. He gives the best idea by far as to the origin of evil. But I was not interested in the origin of evil. I was supremely concerned with the good — its culture and " get-at-ableness." My friend Arthur Clutton-Brock introduced me to Benedetto Croce, and from him I obtained material which I found to be of permanent value in the workshop of my mind.

The poets contributed generously. In them I had always found more soul stuff than in the theologians. " You seek happiness? " says Maurice de Guérin. " It is in the sweet, fine rain that penetrates the heart and later wells forth in tears." Tears truly have a place in the scheme of things; but they are incidental. Joy is fundamental. A surer guide, for me anyway, was Walter Savage Landor. At the age of eighty he wrote, " I warm both hands at the fire of life."

" *Gedenke zu leben!* " " Love to live," says Goethe. Browning in a few lines gave me more courage and enthusiasm for the pilgrimage than all of Shakespeare and Milton combined. Shelley's love of humanity rekindled my own, and old Walt Whitman's " Song of the Open Road " took me " afoot and light-hearted to find divine things more beautiful than words can tell."

All the poets, prophets, dreamers, and writers in endless variety had something to give. Each had his little window through which he saw the world. I could not always see what he saw, nor feel as he felt; but from each I brought away something. These somethings were material for a house of dreams and equipment for the pilgrimage.

The spiritual equipment was the secret of Jesus — the Kingdom of God. I had to realize it, make it mine. God-consciousness came gradually. As it possessed me with increasing certainty other things lost their importance and faded out. I had been associated with the world movement for better conditions for the workers. I carried a rather heavy cargo of class-consciousness. This I could not blend or reconcile with the consciousness of the Kingdom. Fears, ignorances, illusions, jealousies, and intolerances relaxed their grip on me.

When as conscience I sat in judgment on my own moral actions, I was a lenient judge. The new consciousness became a new tribunal with a new code and a new standard of values. Some old ideas died hard, and some of them had uncanny ways of presenting themselves when I imagined they were dead and done for.

This was particularly true of class-consciousness. Despite my knowledge that money and power were as dangerous to poor as to rich, I had contempt for the rich as such. The concept of the Kingdom became a smelter in which these distinctions and illusions were gradually burnt up. All men needed idealism — all men needed the Kingdom. There could be no permanent solution of these difficulties and problems save on the basis of the Kingdom.

There was a long period of internal strife. I was not seeking a short cut to happiness. I wanted the truth and struggled for it. I was willing to pay any price, make any sacrifice, which would ensure peace for my restless soul. I had been driven about by many doctrinal and emotional winds. I wanted rest. A life of conscious striving is not a natural life. Real life is lived unconsciously, normally, naturally. There is a sense in which struggle means growth, but I knew there was a religious consciousness on which the slings and arrows of sin and outrageous fortune had no effect. I sought for that, and found it in the concept of the Kingdom.

I became acquainted with new processes of development. I found a new orientation. Old ideas were swallowed up in the new, and the new grew and enlarged. Creeds, liturgies, rituals, and services lost their interest for me. Followers of Ritschl offered just such experiences as their chief objection to the Kingdom idea. They said it would render the Church obsolete. An obsolete Church merely means obsolete spiritual machinery.

Such things became to me crutches and invalid wheel chairs and kindergarten aids for spiritual children. The millions who still cling to them have a claim upon me, and that claim cannot be fulfilled by hacking at their illusions. They are folks like myself desiring truth, beauty, and goodness. I am of them and must work with them. I must stress the good and largely ignore the less good. I feel no urge to be either prophet or propagandist. God is not in a hurry. I want to move with the crowd — not ahead of it or behind it, but with it and of it.

Twenty years ago Bolton Hall sent me a copy of one of his books and on the flyleaf wrote: " To Alexander Irvine, whose love for men has cast out the fear of them." But there are other fears than the fear of men. There are the fears of life, death, poverty, obscurity, misunderstanding, and failure. These are giants in the pathway of the soul. I must be able to say of myself that I fear them not. To be able truthfully to make such an affirmation one must have brought pretty near to a close the antinomy between the soul and the senses. There must be created an atmosphere in which things inimical to the soul are noxious and abnormal. I have no quarrel with those who believe that such a result may be attained by philosophical or intellectual processes, but state simply that whatever I have attained had its birth and inspiration in the concept of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom is a gospel of joy. Its manifestations are love of life, quickened intellect, and physical rejuvenation. I believe that my brain power or intellectual capacity has developed more since I was sixty than it did in the thirty preceding years. My interest in life and art and literature is deeper and more diversified. My physical being reacts to spiritual and mental conditions. My step is as light and my bodily motions as quick and alert as they were thirty years ago. At an age when most men are on the sunset side of the hill, youth returns to me. When I go west, I shall go young.

My intellectual development was as strange, circuitous, and haphazard as my progress in religious ideas. In this phase of my career I seem to have been dragged up " in the *irregular* way as the Lord led me." The world of books seemed like a forest in which I was aimlessly wandering without a guide. In the selection of books I was fortunate. I believed in those days that I was divinely guided. The life around me was vulgar. I needed a stimulus to fortify me against a constant barrage of depraved suggestions. I knew I could get help from books. I prayed to be guided to the right ones.

I was ambitious to speak correct English, and the best models I found in the novels of Jane Austen. I had a servile mind then. When I developed some degree of social consciousness I went back to such novels as *Pride and Prejudice,* and while still admiring the style I wondered why a book about parasites and social lepers should be admired by thinking people from one age to another.

Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* seemed to me, when I first read it, to be a great story. A few years later I read it again and it seemed to me to be a sort of social sewer in which wallowed over a hundred vulgar, scheming, licentious, stupid parasites. There was only one clean character in the book, and he was a parasite also.

I charged myself with ignorance. These books were popular. They were the standard literature of educated and Christian people. They knew what books were good. I did not. Then a cheap edition of *Sesame and Lilies* came into my possession. It was a revelation. I began to read Ruskin, and for years he was my master. His views of art and life were prophetic and inspiring. When I read Tolstoy's ideas of life and literature I was fortified and confirmed in my own.

There was a time when Shakespeare was one of my demigods. I had the popular idea that he was the world's greatest genius. I had memorized *Hamlet* and knew well his other plays; but just as I had come across curious coincidences in the New Testament, so in Shakespeare I discovered that he had a contempt for the working class. It was Santayana who first drew my attention to the fact that Shakespeare had no religion. I was n't sufficient of a Puritan or an Evangelical to expect sainthood in a poet, but I did suppose that my demigod had created the dramas that bore his name. The Bacon-Shakespeare controversy never interested me. It did interest me to compare *King Lear* as originally written with the same play as Shakespeare revamped it and made it an undertaker's orgy to suit the taste of his age.

I became disillusioned about Milton in the same way. *Paradise Lost* puzzled me. The four musketeers, Lucifer, Belial, Moloch, and Mammon, are rather fascinating scoundrels, and of these Lucifer, of course, is the hero. I know of nothing so absurd in all literature as the presentation of God as a swashbuckling major general marshaling armies in Heaven; nor anything quite so inane as the dialogue between Jehovah and Adam in the garden. There are some fine things in Milton; but *Paradise Lost* is Milton at his worst.

In the writings of Matthew Arnold I found an intellectual quickening which even Ruskin did not give me. I was less interested in his critical acumen than in his insistent demand that truth be made vital.

I have found in good books an escape from the deadening monotony of mediocrity. I never want to evade any responsibility, or set myself apart as a cloistered recluse. That would seem to me to be shunning life. I do, nevertheless, get awfully tired in a human wilderness of sameness. It is then that I go to books as I would to a rest home or a hospital for the care of the body. I find a special refuge in poetry. I go back to old favorites as one goes back to old friends. My " favorite quotation " changes with the time and mood. For years I looked upon the following lines from Tennyson as the greatest in English poetry: —

> Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
> Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

When I had suffered more, been more blamed and misunderstood, I found my greatest comfort and strength in Shelley: —

> To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
> To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
> To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
> To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
> From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
> Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
> This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
> Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
> This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!

I love those last nine lines in " Prometheus Unbound " because I have lived every one of them. To me there is no " greatest " poet. I naturally love the poetry which expresses my own thought or gives me zest in the game of life. Browning sees God in the immensities. He makes me feel Him also in infinitesimals. He is the deepest of thinkers. How often I have gone to him when it seemed as if my inner light was a mere *ignis fatuus* and he has flooded the path to God with light.

. . . . . If I stoop
Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
It is but for a time; I press God's lamp
Close to my breast; its splendor, soon or late
Will pierce the gloom: I shall emerge one day.

Literature is to me a little world by itself. Poetry is one of its great cities. The extracts above belong to the cathedrals of that city. There is the Playhouse, however, and the Kew Gardens, and the House of Dreams. I visit all these places as a bee visits flowers in a garden, and I prospect for something different and better than what raw experiences furnish me.

Reading is a habit. It can be formed by any normal person between nine and ninety. It is one of man's greatest luxuries. Imagine a clod such as I was at nineteen having in his hands the very soul and heart and mind of a great poet, a great novelist, or a great historian! In a book I can follow the writer to the ends of the earth. I can share with a philosopher his findings in the search for truth. The creative minds are the aristocrats of the larger life. I can fellowship with them daily, though I may be — as I often have been — as poor as a church mouse. It is impossible to associate with great minds and remain either ignorant or ill-mannered.

Closely allied to the love of literature is the passion for beauty. One might as reasonably expect to appease hunger by reading a cookery book as to expect to know the work of great artists by means of colored prints, or somebody's opinion of them in books. Great art must be seen to be appreciated. The art galleries have always been to me akin to Gothic cathedrals — sources of culture in the things of the spirit. An educated understanding, not the number of things one knows, is the highest form of education. For some years I deplored the lack of continuous schooling. I thought I had missed something. When I came into contact with the academic mind I became, not only reconciled to my disadvantages, but rather pleased that I had escaped the danger of having whatever I possessed of personality toned down to a balanced mediocrity. Out of such a mental state no enthusiasms could come. The academic mind fears enthusiasms, frowns on adventure, discounts emotion, and avoids all roads that lead to Calvary.

I now live in a little house by the side of a road that leads through a canyon to the mountains. The house is surrounded by oak, eucalyptus, and fir trees. One of the oaks I have named Odin, "the goer." Another I call Thor, "helper of men." I don't know what the Indians called this big tree, but in the old maps he is marked as the boundary line of a forest primeval. In front there is a low stone wall covered with climbing roses, in full bloom now in early February. Behind the house there is a terraced lawn surrounded by flowering shrubs, roses, and perennials which give me a floral procession every month in the year. A narrow lane leads past the side of the house to a eucalyptus grove, and the view from my study window across the lane takes in the garden of Father McTeague. By the same process by which I own a sunset, I have appropriated the padre's garden with its wonderful cacti and acacia trees, now in a glorious yellow bloom.

When I came here I found a dump at the end of the lot. This I turned into a rock garden. I have a passion for flowers, and florists' catalogues are as interesting to me as the Bhagavad-Gita or the Analects of Confucius. I have a view of the mountains, and a few minutes' walk up the hill reveals to me the Pacific Ocean. In all directions, no matter where I look, there is natural beauty — vistas of lovely gardens, close-range views of the mountains and the sea.

A few minutes' walk from here there stands an old Spanish mission. I can hear from my garden the Franciscans chant their orisons and sing their Te Deums. Occasionally some of them call upon me. All sorts of people call: college students, school boys and girls for help in their work, men and women in all walks of life. They come for help — spiritual, mental, and intellectual. " I live in a house by the side of the road," in the language of Sam Walter Foss, and am " a friend to man." In a small town one misses the contacts which London and New York afford. I miss the larger currents of intellectual life. I am at home in the large centres. I am a pilgrim and a stranger in small towns, and have no desire to be otherwise.

Life is full of compensations, and for me never has it been so rich and full as it is at present. I enjoy my small circle of choice friends. They are, I think, the finest I have ever had. But never, never before have I had time to make friends with dogs; nor have I ever known much about birds. The other morning I was out on the lawn with the water hose in my hand when a ruby-throated humming bird began to hover around my head. I imagined at first that he was mistaking me for a cactus, but evidently he was suggesting an adjustment of the spray which would enable him to get a comfortable shower bath. I shot the spray at an angle of forty-five degrees, and he balanced himself in the midst of the spray and enjoyed himself.

My garden is visited by more birds than I have time to look up in the bird book. The better-known are robins, vireos, warblers, chippies, finches, wrens, and thrushes. The mocking bird is the best of the songsters. The blue jay is a sort of boss in the back yard. He is very boisterous and, like a bully, clears the lot as soon as he appears. Just outside my study window an owl has an almost nightly rendezvous. I am told that he is a policeman in birdland. Eagles seldom leave the mountains, but I have seen four of them attack a road-runner by the roadside, and when interrupted they flew away quite angry. Of the feathered tribe that inhabits these parts the road-runners are probably man's best friend. They live on snakes, toads, and snails, and make of cactus fruit their only dessert.

The most friendly of my bird friends are the wood thrushes. They come in pairs always, and hardly care to move out of my way in the garden.

There are very few poor people living around me, but there are plenty of poor dogs. They come to my place early in the morning. I am on friendly terms with them all. I imagine most of them are of such a social status that their names never appear on the society page of canine newspapers. They all remind me of the days when I was helping men of their type in the Bowery. Some of them look as if they had led disreputable lives. One old mangy male I call Sikes. He reminds me of Bill's dog — some distant branch of the family, I presume. His ears are chewed away to shreds; he is covered with scars, and has a nasty disposition. I gave old Sikes a treatment in psychotherapy, and that, with an occasional bone, mended his morals somewhat; but he has a complex on Father McTeague's cats, and to cure that I should have to get at his subconscious mind. I have a strange fondness for the miscellaneous medley of unpedigreed mongrels. None of them will ever bite the hand that feeds them.

I rather suspect I shall be pulled out of this obscure paradise some day, but I want to hold on as long as I can. I want to continue this mental and spiritual attitude toward nature. I see infinite miracles in every flower, every tuft of grass, and every feathered friend of the air. I want to enjoy more gorgeous sunsets, more starlit nights. These tall, gaunt eucalyptus trees around me are like sentinels of God, and I never tire of admiring them. I am a minute philosopher for the time being and see God in earth's infinitesimals.

My sitting room has an open fireplace. In the centre stands a great heavy walnut table; on the walls hang small examples of some of the great painters, and my rare books are stacked on shelves between the windows. The books and pictures constitute my entire material possessions. I live very simply, and have done that all my life. I have never enjoyed the ordinary comforts of other people. Many people, not much more gifted with wisdom than I have been, seem to have been able to combine a career with a living. Somehow I failed to do that. For poverty I take neither credit nor discredit. I chose unremunerative work; I chose it deliberately and with an open eye to the disadvantages. The cost, however, was higher than I anticipated. The inconveniences were sometimes very irritating. Only during my business adventure and my stage experience did I have a chance to be comfortable. I have none of Saint Francis's ideas about poverty. To me "my Lady Poverty" is a blear-eyed old hag, spitting poison. I sought difficult jobs and situations which were always avoided by most men. The work was always the thing, and the more difficult it was the better I liked it.

I am not a one-hundred-per-center. I dislike the jargon of the professional patriot. My nature prevents me from being a booster or a back-slapper. In a paradise of the half-informed I am something of an oddity, but the slightest resentment to being so considered or the smallest feeling that I was in any way superior or better informed would disturb the balance, spoil my equilibrium, and give to an appearance the dignity of truth. I must not even remind those who look upon poverty as a defect in character that, having no desire for the things for which men struggle and compete, I leave more for them. Nor must I permit a pure disinterestedness to be vitiated by the desire for recognition.

XIX

RETROSPECT

FOR some years I have been giving Sunday-morning chapel talks in a boys' preparatory school. A year ago the headmaster invited me to become more intimately associated with the school. Since then I have endeavored to give the boys a love for good literature and make religion vital and attractive to them. This work is a joy to me. Youth responds to ideals, and this group of boys is an oasis in a small-town desert of mediocrity.

This position enables me to devote most of my time to an entirely new adventure. I have much to say that can be said better in the form of a novel than in any other form of expression. I approach this new medium undismayed, either by the deluge of novels that seem to me to be as devoid of beauty and imagination as a mail-order catalogue, or by the taste that calls for them.

Some time ago one of my sons seemed very much impressed by one of the popular novels of the hour. He had just graduated from a college where if a student ever developed a love for good books, he did so in spite of his teachers. I told him I had read several books by the same author and disliked them. My boy thought this particular one was different and better. I read it on the train and wrote to him: " Your high opinion of this book is incomprehensible to me. There is n't a page of fine English in it. It is utterly devoid of either pathos or humor. It contains not one tragic moment. There is n't a single fine character. The hero is a vicious citizen, a lecher in society and a fraud in business."

The world which this popular novelist knows is a world of vicious people. If he knows of any other kind, he does n't " let on," as the Irish say. In the world I know, there is more sunshine than shadow. It is through the shadows I see the sunshine. I want to write of the struggles through which men pass toward the light.

In writing this sketch, I find myself constantly asking: " If you had to live it all over again, what would you do? "

There is no definite answer to that, but I have some clear enough ideas as to what I would avoid. All labels are limitations. Many of them are libels. I would avoid them. I would be more patient with ignorance, superstition, and illusions. Most people are almost helplessly in the grip of such things. Many of them are pathological cases. It will take several incarnations to free them — that is, if all souls survive, which I doubt. Souls are like candles in the wind. I have an idea that some flicker out and are never relit. The Kingdom of God is within, but it must be realized, and many seem as incapable of realizing it as a hen is of swimming or a pig of flying. I had a genius for sarcasm, a tongue that bit like a pencil dipped in caustic. That is all wrong. I gave it up years ago. Humor is a gift of God. Sarcasm is a gift of an opposite character. To laugh with folks is the thing — never at them.

I don't think it would have impaired my usefulness in the slightest degree if I had made larger demands upon society — not as a matter of right, for I have no rights, but as a matter of necessity, in order to be more efficient in my work. I think I would cultivate nerve enough to ask a mission board, composed largely of millionaires, how they could expect me to support a family on sixty dollars a month, forty of which went for rent? I would make larger demands upon myself. I was drawn to forlorn hopes and lost causes as a needle is drawn to a magnet. I do not regret the experience, but I wasted much effort and time. I may be mistaken about that. There are many ways in which a man may be a fool for Christ's sake. I have n't sampled them all.

There was a time when I had some vogue as a speaker in colleges. I never failed to create enthusiasm for social ideals. I often wish I could have made it a career. Small college faculties are very cowardly. They trim their sails for endowments and subordinate the vital truths of life to the god of Things As They Are. One of our most cherished illusions is that a course in college is an education. In the great world crisis, when as a nation we might have led the world toward great things, we failed and became suspect among the nations of the earth. Our failure may be laid at the doors of our colleges. If any institution is entitled to share the dishonor, it is the Church. Our leaders were all college men and Christians.

I never had much to give away, but I gave what I had recklessly, indiscriminately. I might as well have thrown it into the sea. Giving was a luxury, but, like many other luxuries, most of it was foolish. With the same reckless abandon that I gave away all I had, I threw myself at the world. I made many blunders. I was mistaken in many judgments, too often I had zeal without knowledge, and too often got broken on the wheel, without purpose. These mistaken judgments being personal, I paid the price for them — paid it with compound interest. I have encountered bitter opposition, but never once have I defended myself. To my enemies I sometimes have ventured to explain — to my friends, never.

Two things I have yearned for since the nights when as a boy I sat in our chimney corner and listened to my mother's fairy stories. I have longed for a home of my own and I have hoped for the companionship of a woman who should share my ideals and have something of the spiritual qualities of my mother. I have never been fortunate enough to possess either.

That which gave promise of being a home I owned for a year, and then sacrificed it for a questionable cause. Perhaps in divine economy these things are not for me, but the hope will not die.

However, if, as Dr. Johnson said, " happiness consists in the multiplicity of agreeable consciousness," I am a happy man. Life has been and continues to be a glorious adventure. I have given of myself full measure pressed down, asking only in return the minimum, and I do not know of anybody who has gotten so much out of it.

> The vine from every living limb bleeds wine:
> Is it the poorer for that spirit shed?
> Measure thy life by loss instead of gain;
> Not by the wine drunk, but by the wine poured forth;
> For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice;
> And whoso suffers most hath most to give.

To emerge out of an abyss of ignorance, poverty, and dirt to a place in the world where I am honored by the good fellowship and kindly appreciation of all classes of society has involved a struggle, but the struggle gave me my chance for self-expression, and that gave me happiness. I am debtor to all the world. For a man who has nothing I am very rich.

Since the war the world has turned a corner. Nobody seems to know just where it is headed for. It is my world, no matter where it is going. If it is headed for Hell, as many seem to think, that won't faze me. It will be a new experience, and I am perfectly sure that nothing there can disturb my equilibrium. I made a speech once which inspired a thousand garment-makers to strike for a living wage. The chairman of the meeting was a small man of the tribe of Levi. Ten years later I was meandering around the ruins of a dead town in France when I came across the little chairman. He was in uniform. We laughed over old times and laughed at ourselves. We were both pacifists *engaged in war.*

" Where shall we meet next? " he said as we parted.

" Heaven only knows," I said; " perhaps around the throne of God."

" If there is one? "

" Well," I said in a feeble effort to be funny, " if there is, I hope you won't be haggling about the price of it."

" If I should happen to meet you there, Irvine," he said, " I know what you 'll be doing."

" What? "

" Telling funny stories to God."

If the world is going in the other direction, and I arrive with it, I shan't be joking with his Satanic Majesty. I shall try to get a line on his technique in the making of plaster saints. But the world is n't going in that direction, ominous as the signs are. Just now, spiritually and intellectually, it seems, like Pilgrim, to be wallowing in the Slough of Despond. But it will get out and continue its pilgrimage to the city of God.

Some years ago I was interested in the prolongation of life; people in life's seventh decade seem to get that way. It is a strange fact that the men who taught me most about it are all dead, and they died comparatively young. There was the expert who taught me the value of going without breakfast; the kind friend and cheerful philosopher who taught me the dietetic value of chewing; the athlete who inspired me to take my daily dozen. They have all gone west. So also has the brilliant scientist who discovered that four to six ounces of protein a day was enough to keep the human machine going efficiently.

I am no longer interested in longevity. I am more concerned with the Eternal Now. Each day is a new life, and I try to live it as if it were my last. I do not take it very seriously, either; and it would be still worse if I took myself seriously. I am quite sure that the world is moving forward rapidly and despite all the appearances to the contrary is getting better every day. I respond with alacrity to the call of Mazzini: " Slumber not in the tents of your fathers. The world advances — advance with it."

In the art of living, every man formulates his own technique — that is, when life is lived as an art, which is seldom. The care of the body is, or should be, a fundamental consideration. The Greeks and Romans took good care of their bodies but neglected civic health. We have reversed the process. We take excellent care of the public health and neglect our bodies.

Gluttony and drunkenness are bracketed together in the Bible. There is little difference between getting drunk on bootleg liquor and making walking distilleries of ourselves by ignorantly combining the same chemical elements in our stomachs. Gluttony is one of the cardinal sins of the age. It destroys more bodies than liquor. Books on health are almost as plentiful as books on bridge, but they have fewer readers, comparatively. Gluttony is the most respectable of our soul-destroying agencies. I have never heard a sermon on it, never read one on it. We have made it a symbol of reputability, a social virtue. No spiritual superstructure can be built on a gluttonous foundation. The body is the temple of God, when we do not make it a garbage can.

The essential thing in physical culture is rhythm. It is acquired by simple foods in right combinations. Originally man was a frugivorous animal, and the farther he gets away from his original diet the farther he finds himself from internal peace and intestinal happiness. When the miners of the North were starving, I was asked to be one of the speakers at a business men's banquet in London. Belshazzar's feast compared to this one was only a glorified one-cent coffee-stall. Champagne flowed freely. The only limit was capacity. There were three kinds of meat, six varieties of vegetables, puddings, ices, fruits, jellies, nuts, etc. By the time the speakers were called upon most of the diners were gorged and drunk. They were not sprawling on the floor, of course; they were just witless and befuddled. The official announcer had to yell for attention; the speakers had to scream to be heard. It was a disgusting spectacle, and the saddest thing about it was that it was not unusual.

The only difference between that and a gorge in New York is that the New Yorkers get drunk in their stomachs while the Londoner is attacked higher up.

My early training in poverty gave me a tremendous advantage in acquiring a technique in physical fitness. I had less to overcome than most men. My tastes were simple, my wants were few. Four things keep me in the best possible physical condition: first, simple food in right combinations; second, exercise — golf, Indian clubs, walking, and gardening; third, deep breathing; fourth, state of mind. These four — and the greatest of these is a state of mind.

It is an axiom of such experts as William James that " our sympathetic nervous system *grows to the modes in which it is exercised.*" Herein lies a plain pathway to a mental technique. When biology and physiology taught me that thought built organic structures in men and animals, I experimented with thought on much simpler and easier levels. I did not expect thought to knit together my broken ribs, but I employed it to do a much more important service. The injustice of the world, man's inhumanity to man, lay like a dead weight on my heart. I felt keenly the enslavement of religion by wealth, the corruption of politics, and the cowardice of men who knew the truth and refused to stand by it.

A new mental technique gave me a new understanding. When this came, even in a small degree, I ceased to blame anybody for anything. I acquired a faculty of seeing the good in everything — in all men, all movements, all life. There is truth in the statement that as a man's glands are, so is he. There is a greater truth in the saying, " For as he *thinketh* in his heart, so is he."

I have used the power of mind to heal nervous disorders, to quiet disturbed minds, and to offset diseases which people were bringing on themselves. When Antiphon was an exile in Corinth, he posted a sign outside his door: " Within dwells one whose profession it is to comfort the sorrowful and heal their wounds by words." Nobody came. He changed the sign and announced that within Rhetoric was taught, and he did not lack for pupils. I have never commercialized this helpfulness in the slightest degree, but I have not lacked pupils. I have often wondered about that sign — wondered about Antiphon's mental technique.

Many stages of development were passed in acquiring a working mental formula. I was a man of action rather than a man of thought. I felt the necessity, but applied myself in spurts. I came to the study of the subconscious mind through Münsterberg, which was akin to being introduced to Christianity by Nietzsche. My study of greater students led me to a knowledge of the subconscious which solved many difficult problems.

I was awakened to the power of the imagination by Professor Tyndall. In 1870 he gave an address before the British Association on "The Scientific Use of the Imagination." I found a copy in the British Museum. This address startled the scientific world. My mother used imagination at the fireside as a substitute for supper. I used it in the streets selling papers. It is the basis of all art, all literature, all science, and all religion; yet in the catalogues of the New York Public Library and the British Museum combined I found only ten items under the heading, and seven of them were magazine articles.

Psychology gave me a new power, with understanding how to use it. I have avoided psychological cults, extremes, and bizarre or fanciful uses of it. I have used it quietly and with confidence, in the conquest of illusions, the deepening of intelligence, the curbing of impulses, and the alleviation of suffering. I use it in autosuggestion, in affirmations, and in visualization.

It was this power that gave me such success in France. I made men see through war to peace. I made of death a little thing and of life a great adventure. I used it to keep my own body fit and efficient, and when surfeited with slaughter of war and tired of soul I used it to keep my inner candle burning.

On the Somme during the war I used to look over toward Amiens every morning to see if the cathedral was still standing. One day I went over to the city. It was deserted, save for a few straggling citizens and some military policemen. Just beyond the city the guns were belching forth their lava of death, and cavalry horses were clattering over the cobblestones as they passed through on their way to the front. Emotions of awe, desolation, and reverence passed through my mind in quick succession. Incongruous world! Sons of God, blowing each other to shreds. Two thousand years of teaching thrown to the winds, a denial of God and rejection of love.

I ensconced myself in a stall, closed my eyes, and comforted my soul in a daydream. "After all," I meditated, "these heart-rending things are facts, but they are not realities. They are transitory. It is the unseen things that are real and eternal." Then the fact cathedral vanished in gray mist and a new cathedral took its place. Spectral figures of old friends of far away and long ago began to fill the stalls, the aisles and chapels. Saints stepped down from the pedestals and my spirit friends took their places. They had come from the ends of the earth, from gardens in the skies, from graves in Picardy, and from the palaces of the rich and the hovels of the poor. My new cathedral was a temple of friends.

I was awakened from my reverie by a gun barrage. A shell dropped on the west side and bespattered the walls and windows with splinters. The next might pierce the walls and — how splendid, I thought, to go west from this bend in the road, on this leg of the journey! That night, in an uncomfortable dugout, wet and weary, I closed my eyes again and before me a second time passed my astral friends in a pageant of peace. Yes, this image-making faculty could be used anywhere and under all circumstances.

"It is curious to observe," says Nietzsche, " how anyone who leaves the traditional highway in order to travel in his own proper path always has more or less the sense of being an exile, a condemned criminal, a fugitive from mankind." I have never been important enough to excite violent opposition, but unimportant as I have been, everything around me has seemed to combine to make me suffer for the sin of being myself. Many better men, many more useful men than I have ever been, have been utterly overwhelmed in various reforms during the past twenty-five years. Some lost faith in progress, others lost faith in themselves. Some of them discovered that the cause espoused was not worth starving for. They " had to live," so they said, and starvation is modern society's method of stopping the mouth of the prophet.

Unlike the health reformers, these men did not die. They passed out of public notice and became respectable again. Of all the perils that beset my pathway, the dread of becoming respectable has for me the greatest horror. That is the paralysis of all effort. It is the eclipse of the liberal mind.

I have no quarrel with that small coterie of brilliant critics who dispense with what we call the eternal verities. I have no quarrel with anybody, anyway, but my knowledge of men convinces me that men need religion. I am convinced of my own need, all the world to the contrary notwithstanding. My growth came through struggle. It was a progressive revelation of the divine.

After wandering over the barren moorlands of theological speculation for many years, I came to what I conceive to be an ultimate belief. The Kingdom concept, as Jesus gave it, is to me a body of divinity, a philosophy of religion, and a technique of the spiritual life, in seven words: " The Kingdom of God is within you." The more I pondered over this magic phrase the more I saw in it the technique of Jesus and the solution of my spiritual problems. The effect was an illumination. The result was a miracle of spiritual freedom. Here was a programme, a technique which completely satisfied the longings of the soul and developed into God-consciousness, which is the alpha and omega of all spiritual strivings.

A new passion for truth took hold of me. As new ideas came I was slow to accept and timid to express them. Jesus was not a Christian. He organized no sect or church, wrote no books, wore no distinctive garb. He was a hater of shams. The religion of His day was full of them. At times the leaders made Him angry and He castigated them with an invective hardly equaled in history. Yet with ineffable tenderness He said, " A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." In the course of centuries His new commandment and His Kingdom concept were bartered away for a series of ambiguous doctrines that nobody understands.

The Celtic temperament is volatile and fluctuates mercurially from one extreme to another. It reacts quickly to impulse and environment. It is easily enthused, easily depressed. It touches every note in the gamut and lingers not long on any key. Great purposes, religious zeal, and intense suffering have been my stabilizers, but they were temporary, ephemeral. The Kingdom concept was a new conversion; it gave me a new outlook upon life and a new insight into the things of the spirit. I reëxplored my own little spiritual world and discovered there new forms of beauty, new approaches to truth, new motives for goodness. Not the least of the new discoveries was a new light on the technique of Jesus in His use of the parable.

How strange that one may preach on these parables for half a century and still be ignorant of their inner meaning. How simple! A story of common life, with a divine meaning — the former transitory, the latter eternal; one an appearance, the other a reality. This parable view of life is invaluable in spiritual technique. All incidents, episodes, crises, cataclysms — what are they? Parables! Spiritual vision sees through them and grasps the truth.

Thus, to me, the heart of humanity is inknit with the texture of God. This devil's dance of greed and selfishness is to the life of the spirit what a boil is to the body — an impurity, a temporary condition. At heart, all is good; appearances to the contrary are backwashes — tributaries oozing out of slime and mud. Nothing which is inimical to happiness can happen to me. All impurities may be burnt up in God-consciousness.

So I plod along with my world, a shoulder-comrade to everybody on the pilgrim way. For one skilled in the anatomy of misfortune there is a place on the road, and that is my major claim. I am at home with those who have sorrow. I am not so much at home with special sanctities, castes of religious goodness, yeast stirrers and uplifters. This aversion to professionalism in religion is something embedded in the subconscious mind. If any of these types needed anything which I had to give I would serve them as quickly as I would serve a beggar at my door or a criminal in a prison cell; but somehow holy words and sanctified airs give me a chill. I need to train my sympathetic nervous system into a kindlier attitude toward the uncongenial. After all, even in the pharisee there is a reality behind his self-righteousness, and I must train myself to see it, and see it only.

I make no distinctions between the dogs that come around in the morning. The blue jay is an aristocratic bandit, but I condone his bossism on the basis of his adrenal glands. Father McTeague's black cat ate one of my pigeons, yet I find myself excusing him. My trees and shrubs and flowers grow to their own peculiar form and color. Mark Twain was one of my heroes. When Maxim Gorki came to New York, the yellow press made an attack on him. Mark was on a committee to welcome or entertain Gorki, but when the papers attacked the foreigner Mark Twain got from under — he resigned from the committee and remained respectable. To me it was as if a fine piece of statuary had fallen to fragments at my feet. Some intimate friends have done the same sort of thing toward me. The loss of a friend by death is a sorrow. The loss of a friend through cowardice and betrayal is a calamity that sears the soul.

In the Kingdom concept the soul learns to stand alone — absolutely alone. It is the one absolute prophylactic for unrest, fear, cowardice, selfishness, and sham. When we can truly love our enemies, we may be assured we are in the path of attainment. I have dabbled in philosophies, sampled theologies, flirted with cults, and espoused many propagandas. They were all good, but often they stood in the way of the best, the ultimate, the absolute. "The Kingdom of God is within" is the ultimate belief. It is the religion for all mankind.

As I finish this outline of my life and thought, my kinsmen in Northern Ireland call me. They are engaged in a struggle with one of Ireland's worst enemies — the liquor traffic. In a few weeks I shall be on my way. Later I want to visit Russia. My *Soul of a Slav* has been translated into Russian, and I have an invitation to lecture there. I never seek such invitations or calls. There is a law of the universe, a strange, mysterious law, that moves me and I obey it. I am not leaving home. I am at home everywhere. All people are my people. I am a sort of minuteman of the Infinite.

I have now arrived at the fork of the road. I go one way and you go another. Some day I shall arrive at the last turning. When I do, I shall be merely exchanging one beautiful world for another.

> Life! we 've been long together,
> Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
> 'T is hard to part when friends are dear, —
> Perhaps 't will cost a sigh, a tear;
> Then steal away, give little warning,
> Choose thine own time;
> Say not "Good night," but in some brighter clime
> Bid me "Good morning."

Date Due

[redacted]			

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library

1 1012 01038 6771